THROUGH BLIND EYES

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THE BLIND
AS SEEN
THROUGH BLIND EYES

BY

MAURICE DE LA SIZERANNE

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AUTHORIZED TRANSLATION FROM THE SECOND FRENCH EDITION

BY

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PREFACE.

Count d'Haussonville, who writes a most interesting introduction to the French edition of this work, says: "This is not only a good book, it is a good deed." Maurice de la Sizeranne is a man who has nobly and unselfishly dedicated his life to ameliorating the unhappy condition of the blind. Born in D'Evona, July 30, 1859, he became blind when but nine years of age. He was educated in the National Institution for Youthful Blind, in Paris, graduated from the school in 1877, and, being in an independent position, devoted his life to improving the condition of the blind.

In 1879 he accepted the position of professor in the school of his former studies, where he taught music for a time, but being obliged, because of ill-health, to relinquish his professorship, he devoted his entire time to a propaganda in behalf of the blind. In 1881

he devised an abbreviated system of orthography for the blind, which has since been generally employed in France, Switzerland, Belgium, and Canada, and has served as a basis for a similar method used in Germany, Italy, and Spain. In 1883 he founded the *Valentine Haüy*, a journal treating on all questions relative to the blind—systems of education, methods of teaching, schools, works, etc., which circulates throughout the world in their schools and institutions. During this same year he established the *Louis Braille*, a monthly journal printed in relief in point print, after the Braille system. This periodical is also widely circulated, and is read by the blind wherever the French language is spoken. This magazine contains matters that are of special interest, and that can be found nowhere else. In 1884 he established the *Revue Braille*, which is also printed in relief, and which now appears weekly. The articles are carefully prepared, and are upon literary, scientific, and musical topics. The *Revue* is no inconsiderable factor in the general intellectual culture of the blind.

In 1883, with untiring devotion, he organized the "Valentine Haüy Conferences," a gathering of typhlologists. At these meetings,

which are monthly, those interested in the welfare of the blind meet at the National Institution, and discuss all questions relative to their advancement.

In 1885, realizing the few intellectual opportunities afforded to great numbers of the blind, and the small number of books to which they had access, he founded, under the name of the "Braille Library," a collection of useful works printed in relief. These volumes were produced, for the greater part, as a voluntary offering by pupils whom M. de la Sizeranne had taught the Braille print. The "Valentine Haüy Library," also established through his efforts, unites in one collection all works relating to blindness and the blind, and may be consulted by any interested in this subject.

He has also published a large number of pedagogical works relating to the instruction of the blind, some of which have been widely translated in other languages. Among his works may be mentioned the following:

The Blind in Useful Avocations, a brochure, Paris, 1881.

The True Mission of the Smaller Schools for the Blind, pamphlet, translated in English, Paris, 1884.

J. Gaudet, His Life and Works, Paris, 1885.

The Blind in France, 1885. Translation in English. Paper read before the Fourth General Congress of the Blind, at Amsterdam, 1885.

Ten Years of Study and Work for the Blind, Paris, 1890. Published by Paul DeLarue, Paris.

The present volume *The Blind as Seen by a Blind Man* received the commendation of the French Academy in 1889, and has since been translated into Russian. Published by Hachette & Co.

In this work, as in the volume entitled *The Work of the Blind*, the author has endeavored to make the public understand that the blind do not constitute a peculiar class, but that when properly educated, intellectually and professionally, they may be enabled to so successfully prosecute their work as to make their livelihood thereby. But to accomplish this result, two things are essential:

First, that the schools for the blind afford for their pupils most thorough and serious instruction; second, that the public be more fully informed as to the possibilities and capacities of the blind. It is for the purpose

of attaining this double object that the *Valentine Haüy Association for the Advancement of the Blind* was established. This organization, which has been in existence only since 1889, already numbers more than two thousand members. In this society are gathered all who are engaged with the blind for the purpose of facilitating the work of special establishments, as schools, workshops, and asylums, and by furnishing information which may put the trained blind in touch with those by whom their services may be needed. The aim of the association is to keep continually before the public, by word of mouth as well as through the press, the necessities and the interests of the blind. Through addresses, journals, and books, an endeavor is constantly made to influence public opinion, in order that the blind may have opened to them all of those avenues of work for which, by education and natural ability, they may be fitted, and in which they may hope to succeed.

One of the principal ideas of M. de la Sizeranne is to utilize and make effective the intellectual resources of the blind, which too frequently are allowed to remain inactive, and which might prove for the possessor of inestimable value. During the past few years a

large number of these have very satisfactorily and successfully studied and followed special lines of work, and have, thereby, by practical demonstrations greatly advanced their cause, for it can be readily understood that none better than the blind themselves can appreciate the needs of the blind. Not an inconsiderable number are devoting their efforts now to the *Louis Braille*, the *Braille Review*, the *Valentine Haüy*, and the *Braille Library*, as well as to the *Valentine Haüy Institute*, the *Conferences*, and the *Association of Valentine Haüy*.

M. de la Sizeranne is director of the Journal and Library for the Blind, member of the Council of the Society of Registration and Relief for the Blind, for securing positions for graduates of the National Institution for the Blind, General Secretary of the Valentine Haüy Association for the Benefit of the Blind, and has been General Secretary of the International Congress for the Amelioration of the Condition of the Blind, held at Paris in 1889. In 1887 he was honored by the French Academy by the acceptance of this work, *Les Aveugles par un Aveugle*.

So little is known among educated and philanthropic people in this country of the enormous amount of blindness that exists, and the disheartening difficulties and obstacles that are

encountered by all except the most gifted or favored of this unfortunate class, that this interesting book has been translated. It gives us a glimpse into lives that we might expect to be dark and cheerless, and we are astonished to find them brilliant with possibilities, awaiting only our intelligent and sympathetic assistance to develop courage, self-reliance, and power. With the large-hearted generosity that characterizes the American people, we have provided schools for blind children, and almshouses for blind paupers, but with singular indirection we have failed to supplement our endeavors to instruct the blind youth, by the co-operation necessary to make them self-supporting, when we have given them a trade or profession. We send out young men fully qualified to tune pianos, or make chairs, or brushes, or mattresses, but when they find themselves forced to struggle against the active competition of those equally well qualified and perhaps physically more robust, and who, above all, have the gift of sight, the result can be easily foretold--helpless and discouraged they sink down to inevitable mendicancy. At this critical period in the career of the blind youth, the French are not only more humane and more generous, but, from the colder standpoint of political economists, shrewder

and more far-seeing. The Valentine Haüy Association, founded, as we have seen, through the wise and warm-hearted efforts of Maurice de la Sizeranne, takes upon itself the task of finding positions for capable blind young men and women, suited to their qualifications. It is, indeed, a general registry, in which the public may find among the blind those anxiously desirous to be allowed to do the work for which they have fitted themselves. Through the energetic propaganda of this society, hundreds of bright and intelligent young people of both sexes are thus generously aided in their attempts at self-support. After a longer or shorter period they find themselves able to stand alone, and, as our author shows, ultimately acquire the position in the community of self-respecting and honored citizens, enjoying all the privileges and all the rights that appertain to their more fortunate fellows.

It is that the public may gain a truer knowledge and develop a more intelligent, if not a more profound, sympathy with a portion of our people, who have among their number some of the most gifted as well as the most brilliant of our citizens, that the work has been translated.

F. P. L.

INTRODUCTION.

The night express drew up for a moment only at the station. My guide opened the door and merely said, "A passenger at the end on the right." I climbed up the steps, lifted in my valise, wraps, etc., and before the train was actually in motion, a portion of my baggage was put in the rack, some disposed of around my knees, and my valise, stuffed with papers, open on the seat by my side. From this improvised office I drew forth a voluminous correspondence, not yet opened. In a few moments I had separated the letters written in ink from those in point print, and reserving the former to be read to me later, I rapidly ran through the latter, making notes from time to time by the aid of my "Braille form."

My guide, knowing from my long familiarity with railway carriages that his services would not be required, had followed me with his baggage, and was then absorbed in a volume

of Jules Verne. This scene, which I had enacted perhaps hundreds of times, and certainly without the slightest hesitation, seemed greatly to perplex my travelling companion, a prominent manufacturer, opposite whom I had seated myself. He observed me curiously, and after I had become immersed in my work, he turned to my guide, as though I were incapable of answering him, and asked in a subdued voice: "Was it from birth?" My guide, too much occupied by his book to be disturbed, responded merely by a shake of the head. After a pause, another interrogation, or rather a surprised exclaimation: "He *writes?*" An affirmative nod was the answer. A long pause followed, then curiosity was lost in sympathy: "He must be unhappy enough! What can he do?" Response by signs was no longer possible, so, taking up the conversation myself, and giving unusual emphasis to the first personal pronoun frequently repeated, I said: "Had I been blind from birth I could still do all that I am doing now." And then I endeavored to make clear to my interlocutor—a most agreeable man by the way—that one who was blind was not necessarily stupid, and deaf and dumb, with all of his faculties in eclipse by reason of the darkness about him,

and that in order to make inquiries concerning him, when he was *vis-à-vis*, it was not necessary, as it would be with a chimpanzee, a well-trained dog, or a child under age, to speak of him in the third person: "Is *he* this?" "Can *he* do that?" I said this and much else, touching on the physical, intellectual, and social conditions of a man without sight.

When my fellow-traveller, reaching his destination, prepared to dismount, we assisted him out with his bundles, and before closing the door he hesitated for a moment, to show me, no doubt, that I was understood, and said, earnestly: "Thank you; hereafter, when I meet with one who is blind, I will not say, 'he!'"

I returned to my corner, but I did not resume my correspondence. I thought that there must certainly be a large number of intelligent and educated people in the same situation as this man of affairs.

They do not know that the blind of France alone number 32,000, that there are 200,000 in Europe, and nearly two millions throughout the globe; that for nearly a century, through the beneficent work of Valentine Haüy—whose name is perhaps scarcely known to them, and his life and work not at all,—large

numbers of the blind have been educated and trained, and have been enabled to lead active and useful lives.

Many people, it seems to me, may be glad to have a former pupil of one of the schools for the blind, and one whose intimate relations with hundreds of the blind have never ceased, tell them, in all simplicity and sincerity, *who are the blind that are being educated; how they are educated, and what they are taught.* Such is the *motif* of this book.

M. S.

THROUGH BLIND EYES.

PART I.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE BLIND.

CHAPTER I.

THE PHYSICAL QUALITIES OF THE BLIND.

To know a man one must take him unawares. He must be seen when he is alone and off his guard. In his chamber at rest and in his shop at work, at breakfast and at supper, in his house and in the street. We must chat with him when we meet him formally in society in dress coat and gloves, and by his own fireside in dressing-gown and slippers, surrounded by his family. We must see how he bears himself in making and receiving a

visit. And then, knowing the outward manner of man that he is, we must go deeper, if we may, and discover what passes within : how he reasons on this subject or that ; whether his inclinations lead him to mathematics or to metaphysics, to music or to poetry. If, perchance, he has a book in his hand, we will peep over his shoulder and see what he reads, and more especially what he *re-reads*, the title of his favorite chapter, what it is that causes him to pause for a moment to think, perhaps to dream.

And after we have measured his aptitudes and altitudes, physical and mental, we will attempt the more difficult task of penetrating into the sanctuary of his moral being and learn what he loves and what he hates, to what even he is indifferent. We will try the temper of his character and find how he carries himself in the conflicts of life. And so, in studying the physical, mental, and moral qualities of the *blind*, we will go with them where they go, watch them as they pass and repass our windows, follow them step by step, thread our way after them, and discover, if we can, the qualities and characteristics of which even they themselves may scarcely be aware. The task is by no means an easy one. The

ear grows keen where it is always night, and impressions of sound take a new value.

There is, as we know, a wide difference between hearing and listening, between seeing and observing. The deaf observe; the blind listen. The blind acquire in time a wonderful delicacy of perception and a remarkable ability to analyze sounds. They have an unusual aptitude for making subtle distinctions. The senses of touch and of smell become refined to a remarkable degree, and the impressions to which they give rise are analyzed and registered. These special senses—of hearing, touch, and smell—are more constantly and more carefully interrogated by the blind in placing themselves in relation to the external world than by those who see.

If a blind man were numbed with cold, and in an atmosphere from which every odor and sound were excluded, his condition would indeed be most helpless and pitiable; but when he finds himself in ordinary surroundings, the richness of life is manifested in its perfumes, various and significant, in its noises and in its tangible sensations. He enters with active interest into all that passes about him. Lacking sight, he still makes nice distinctions between the streets of the city and of the village,

between the broad roads and open country. It is a mistake to think that for the blind all ways are alike. There are many that are well known to him, and without inquiring he not infrequently knows where he is. The dimensions of the sidewalk, the nature of the ground, the number and kind of vehicles which he encounters, all are recognized, and the streets which cross his way, the trees edging the gutters, and the different shops, become landmarks to him.[1] Touch is not wholly in the hand, but over the entire body. Even within the shoe the foot distinguishes the kind of soil beneath it. Stop the ears of an attentive blind man, and he will still be able to tell you whether he walks on smooth or rough pavement, on wood or on stone, on a macadamized or on an asphalt road, whether he is crossing a covered drain, is on the beaten path, on ploughed land, in a meadow, or on a stubble field.

[1] "We are not in equal degrees masters of all our senses. There is one, that of touch, in which the action is never suspended when we are awake. It is distributed over the entire body, as an ever watchful guard to warn us of anything that might offend. It is from this also that we gather the larger part of our experience, and which, therefore, we should especially cultivate. The blind have a much more refined sense of touch than we, because, not having the assistance of sight, in order that they may learn, they are obliged to depend on this one sense where we employ both."—JEAN JACQUES ROUSSEAU: *Emile.*

The sense of smell also brings to him impressions at once varied and characteristic. Fresh meats, pomade, damp tobacco, new leather, fish, hay, medicinal plants, the air blown over cooking truffles, paper newly printed, have odors which make known to him beyond the shadow of a doubt whether he is passing before a butcher shop or a hair dresser's, a tobacconist's or a shoemaker's, the great market or a cavalry barracks; whether the puff that comes through the air-holes is from the laboratory of a druggist or the office of a physician; whether he is opposite a newspaper stand or the flower-stall on the corner.

These things do not, indeed, always escape the attention of one who sees. Octave Fêuillet, that clever analyst of subtle qualities, gives a page of olfactory impressions, so real and characteristic that we cannot wonder that the hero is overwhelmed by recollections of Paris. "He feels that he breathes the peculiar odors of the boulevard, of the evening, that familiar mixture of gas and tobacco smoke, the underground kitchens, the fragrance wafted from the flower-shops. He catches the atmosphere of the salon, of the crowded theatre, and of the actresses' dress-

ing-rooms, the heavy air peculiar to the departing crowd on the stairway, the strong scent of rich furs and of brocaded cloaks over bare shoulders." [1]

But in the blind, to the usually more sensitive perceptions of touch and of smell must always be added that of *hearing doubly acute.* The street is more or less filled with passing people, it is noisy or it is silent, it is crossed by a boulevard or an avenue, traversed by a line of street cars or omnibuses, while private carriages or public cabs roll rapidly along. These vehicles no more resemble one another to the ear than to the eye. The motion of the tramway is not that of the hackney coach, and the landau with its prancing horses gives a different impression to the ear from that of the family coach with its easy-going cobs.

Every sound has its meaning. It may be the bell of a convent or the clock of a hospital, a joiner or a stone-mason at work and all are noted, associated, and utilized.

This is in the city, the village, or town, but in the open country the blind have almost as many landmarks and guide-posts. Here is a little mound, a rut made by passing wheels, a

[1] Octave Fêuillet: *La Morte.*

rocky or a sandy footpath, there a space carpeted with grass or moss or pine needles. Now a resinous smell comes from the evergreens, the sweet breath of new-mown hay floats over the meadows, or a sudden whiff is blown from a cluster of broom or wild honeysuckle. His ear catches the murmur of the brook through the trees and bushes. The lilacs do not say the same things as the oaks, nor is the rustle of their leaves quite the same in May as in October.

Neither do the birds sing the same songs when he sits at the foot of a great elm in a dense wood, as by the river which winds slowly through the fields. The crowing of the cocks and the cackling of the hens announce the fact that a farm-yard is near. Nature is indeed peopled, living, and varied for the blind no less than for those who see.

It goes without saying that a blind man loses many of the joys that sight alone can give; but those impressions that remain to him are so exact as to be almost painfully acute, intensified as they are by the fact that he has no distractions from sight. It is very easy to understand, then, that with all their resources the blind need not necessarily remain merely obstructions in the busy world, weary-

ing and being wearied, unable to move from place to place without a thousand precautions and at the expense of great effort. Their lives may be full, rich, and active, individual and personal.

In the open country, as in a street echoing with the sounds of busy life, a blind man accustomed to the place will know where he is, and will lead his guide, who is usually a child and nothing more than an instrument in his hands, valuable indeed, but wholly mechanical, and whose eyes are useful only when guided by the blind man's intelligence.

Sometimes when our clever blind friend knows well the neighborhood in which he lives (and it is not the *Faubourg Montmârtre* or the *Champs Élysées*), he will leave his guide, as one might throw aside a burdensome garment, and with an equal sense of freedom and comfort. Near institutions for the blind one not infrequently meets these pedestrians walking rapidly with neither guide nor cane.

Observe this blind man, if you please, threading his way along a quiet avenue,—the *Boulevard des Invalides*, for instance. He traverses street after street; busy people cross his path; he passes children at play on the sidewalk, and the portly citizen with dignified

and measured step taking his morning constitutional. He passes ten, twenty doorways without slackening his pace. Reaching at length the one looked for, he stops without hesitation, seizes quickly the bell-knob, the door is opened, and he enters. If you will follow him farther, you may see him cross the vestibule, push open a glass door, leisurely mount the stairs, and ring the bell at the second landing. And this is perhaps to see the editor of the *Journal for the Blind.* Every hour in the day, every day in the year I receive such visitors, who come perhaps to converse with me, to seek or bring information, to read their proofs or manuscript. They do this work and attend to their affairs with an absolute independence of both body and mind.

All this may seem marvellous to those unfamiliar with the habits of the blind. It is, however, a most ordinary affair.

"The blind do many curious and dextrous things. Professor Campbell, formerly of this country, now in charge of a school for the blind in England, and who is totally deprived of sight, has travelled long distances on horseback without a guide. He has made with his son on several occasions the ascent of Mt. Blanc.

"Henry Fawcett, too, the distinguished Postmaster-General of Gladstone's Cabinet. who died in 1884, who had

been blind since his twenty-fifth year, used frequently to skate for hours and often alone as a relaxation from the exacting cares of his parliamentary duties. He was an enthusiastic fisherman, and used to ride daily, often at a gallop, to the imminent danger of himself and others." [1]

Let us analyze, if you please, this series of actions. Our blind friend has time and again traversed the *Boulevard des Invalides.* He knows that it is little frequented, particularly at night and in the morning. He knows perfectly the topography of the place, the number and character of the streets which cross it, where the way is open and where obstructed; he may therefore trust himself there without danger. He may walk fearlessly so long as he hears nothing. But when the sound reaches him of footsteps approaching from the opposite direction, he turns a little to the right, and passes by without delay and without collision. Farther on he meets the children, filling the street with their games. Children are easy to recognize; their noisy prattle and their irregular steps betray them. Now the blind man, knowing that it is difficult to count with any degree of certainty upon the actions of these little people, judges it prudent to leave the sidewalk for the narrow footpath or

[1] *Life of Henry Fawcett*, by Leslie Stephen, London.

the street until the group is passed, when he returns to the side of the street most convenient for him.

Perhaps you have never noticed that in many streets there is a gradual declivity as the streets cross. This is perceptible to the eye, but scarcely noticeable under the foot of one who sees. To the blind, however, it is a valuable guide, and this slight depression in the sidewalk indicates to him the exact point at which he must cross the street. Before undertaking to do this, however, he waits carefully until he is assured that no vehicle is near. On approaching a wall, a stationary wagon, or simply a tree, the blind experience a sensation at once auditive and tactile. The steps have a different sound when near a large object of whatever kind. The air, being more compressed, re-acts on the sensitive nerves of the face, so that a new presence is actually felt. This last sensation is exceedingly subtle, but it does exist, and it is much more difficult for one without sight to find his way about if his hat is drawn down over his face than when he goes with uncovered head.

As one might suppose, the blind find darkness and fog no obstacle to their progress, but it is a rather curious fact that they find

their way under such conditions more easily than in the full light of day. Vehicles roll along more slowly, and pedestrians walk with greater care and hesitation. By all this the blind people in their way are less exposed to injury. But, on the other hand, when the sun shines brightly, and especially when a brisk wind smothers the sounds which in so large a degree aid the blind, they are utterly confounded. In a word, to those who replace sight by hearing, obscurity lies not in the absence of light, but in the confusion of sounds.

If you watch a blind man in the street without a guide as a regiment of soldiers passes by with beating drums, you will see him slacken his pace and walk with great caution, especially if the street is narrow and shut in by high buildings, for the reverberations will deaden all other sounds and he will hear nothing distinctly. A number of large bells ringing together, a heavily loaded wagon, a company of artillery rattling over the pavement, are most formidable for the blind.

Many small signs serve to indicate to a blind man where he is. The paving of the walk at the entrance of the doorway, the tiling of the sewer, the discontinuance of the asphalt walks on the avenue, has each its message to his

quickened senses. He passes five, ten, fifteen houses, and then stops just where his business requires.

Is it necessary to explain how he mounts the stairway and rings the bell? He does this just as every one else does, with the little peculiarities of manner that vary according to personality and circumstance. One's bearing is not the same when calling upon a man of wealth and distinction as it is when collecting an account from a humble creditor, when consulting with anxious forebodings a famous specialist, or when paying a long-anticipated visit with the eagerness of a first love. The marble steps of a great mansion, with all that it contains of happiness or misery, may be more wearisome than the simple stairway leading to the little room where loved ones are waiting.

The blind feel all these things and show it in their manner. The hand, like that of one who sees, may tremble when he pulls the bell-cord—if there be a bell-cord,—for Progress, that prosaic leveller, tends to substitute an electric button for the good old bell which no two persons ring alike, and which to the practised ear was an excellent indication of the kind of a visitor one was to receive.

In the house or garden, as might be expected, the blind are even more independent and more at their ease than in the street. They ascend and descend, they come and go as others do, without the need of guidance. They dress and undress, eat and drink, as every one else does, and with the same appetite.

All this may seem superfluous, and yet there are many intelligent people who cannot understand and are astonished when they see that the blind can go up and down stairs alone without breaking their necks; can guide themselves about the house; go in and out of the garden; dress and feed themselves, and do the numberless other things that they daily accomplish with ease and safety.

If they are clever they may engage in household affairs, and not without success.

Would you have a demonstration of this? Turn, then, to the *Quinze Vingts*. Among the three hundred blind who live in the vast enclosure of this the oldest of such benevolent institutions, there are a certain number of elderly women, who, after thirty years of labor, are placed on the "retired list." The porter will give you the number of one of their rooms; knock at the door, and you will discover a modest interior, clean and even dainty. Flowers are in the window, curtains over the

bed, knitted or crochetted chair-covers, polished window-panes, not one particle of dust on the furniture, everything in perfect order. If you are so fortunate as to arrive at meal-time, or a day when the mistress of the little establishment is receiving one or two of her old companions, you will see served delicacies on a snowy table-cloth, poached eggs, veal chops with gravy, stewed potatoes, some delicious dessert, in appearance, odor, and to taste most appetizing, and all prepared before the company of blind and seeing friends by the blind hostess, who is cook, waitress, and maid-of-all-work. I might add that these details of menu are not imaginary ; they were furnished me by one of the participants in such a little repast.

All the blind are certainly not gifted with dexterity. Among them, as among those who see, there are many who would find it difficult to sweep a room, to use a needle, or to broil a chop. We must guard against making broad generalizations from insufficient premises. Because we know one clever blind man, we must not conclude that all the blind men are skilful, and certainly we must not believe that awkwardness and brusqueness are the inevitable result of blindness because we happen to

have met among the blind some who were stupid and clumsy. For it is much more easy to exaggerate defects than acquirements.

It often happens that what the blind are able to accomplish by touch alone is so marvellous that one is led to inquire whether it is not possible for them to distinguish color. Color is, of course, neither tangible nor perceptible to the hearing, smell, or taste. Nevertheless, in certain cases the coloring material has an odor which the blind may recognize. Often, also, two objects which *appear* to differ only in color are really unlike in texture, in shape, in size, or in weight. Here may be two chairs apparently alike, both covered with silk, tapestry, or velvet, as the case may be. One is red, the other green ; but one is a little heavier than the other. If one who sees wishes to designate the chairs he will say the red or the green. He will not have noticed that the green weighs two or three pounds more than the red, that there is a slight difference in the shape, that the velvet is more raised in one than the other, that an ornamental nail is wanting in one. The blind, however, will immediately seize on these little differences and remember them. They will recall also that they have heard some one say that one chair

is red, the other green, and they retain in memory the visible by the tangible differences, and if you ask them to bring you the red or the green chair they will make the selection without hesitation, and will say to you as any one might, "I am seated on the red chair," because living among those who see and speaking their language they use the terms commonly employed, and so designate the chairs as red, or green, and not heavy or light, new or old.

There are innumerable resemblances that the blind employ in distinguishing a multitude of things. Those in whom all of the senses are perfect are absorbed by what they see, and for the most part so centred is the attention in the visible, that further inquiry is not pressed. Satisfied by what passes before the eye, one does not observe that added to these are trifling, perhaps, but very significant qualifications recognizable by touch, hearing, smell, or taste.

"Between men," says Pascal, "so wide is the diversity that the tones of the voice, the manner of walking, of coughing, and of sneezing are different. This is indeed true, and those who see, absorbed by the form, the hair, the beard, the glance of the eyes, the expres-

sion of the face, scarcely note the shades of difference in tone and in movement that are carefully listened for by the blind and used with advantage."

"Who of us has not been pleased to discover that with bandaged eyes he could tell the height of the people surrounding him from the direction from which the voice came? This is done every day by the blind, and more than that they are often able, without other aid than the voice, to tell with approximate correctness the age of the person speaking. It is a fact that the voice undergoes a slight alteration each year, but our senses are not sufficiently subtle to appreciate the gradual changes. We recognize them only in the broader grades. We distinguish readily the difference in the wailing of infancy, the strong virile tones of mature manhood, and the trembling voice of old age; but the intermediate degrees escape us.

"Time, however, with its slow but constant progress, leaves its traces as definitely on our voices as on our features, traces to which we may be insensible, but which are readily recognizable by the acutely sensitive ears of the blind."[1]

The blind quickly learn to recognize the kind of people with whom they come in contact. The laborer on his way to the wood-yard smoking his strong black pipe has neither the fine shoes nor the light step of the depart-

[1] Dr. Samuel Howe, "On the Education of the Blind," *North American Review*, 1883.

ment clerk with his fragrant cigar. The dainty lady, even though on foot, does not walk as the burdened market-woman, and the bustling huckster has a tread quite different from that of the pious priest on his way to church or to the sick-bed. An awkwardness of manner or an elegance of gait and carriage is manifested to the trained ear by a totality of sounds and suggestions more easy to understand and appreciate than to define; but it is certainly true that the blind recognize and admire ease and grace both of deportment and of gesture in those with whom they are brought in contact.

All this relates, however, only to the outside,—to the surface. The voice expresses the man himself and is the truest exponent of his inner life. So long as one remains perfectly silent and motionless before a blind man, it is impossible for him to know or to conjecture who it may be or what are his intentions. But it is impossible long to remain absolutely still; a movement, a cough, a sneeze, and another presence is betrayed to him, he may even know without further sign who is there. A word and the key of the whole situation is given to him. One may be recalled by the voice almost as readily as by the face, and the voice

changes less. After a long separation one may have a doubt as to a friend's identity, but a word will dissipate it in an instant. It may be a certain pronunciation, a certain manner of articulating, of inflection, certain tones of the voice, that cannot be forgotten. And if these have penetrated the soul of the blind man at some supreme hour of his life, the memory, bitter or sweet, is engraven in his heart, for though he could not see the look with which the words were spoken, he heard and understood even the sigh; and at the other end of the world, after twenty years' of absence, perhaps even of indifference, the whole vivid scene is recalled as the first tone greets his ear.

We are in the habit of controlling, more or less, our countenances, but not our voices, and this is to the advantage of the blind. We endeavor to alter our expression to suit the circumstance, but we forget to prepare the tones of our voices also, and this is by far the more difficult. It is not easy to sustain a discussion or even a simple conversation without betraying some emotion through the voice,—anger, suffering, pleasure, or disdain. One false inflection declares the constraint, and a slight trembling, an accent a trifle ironic,

makes us feel under what emotion the soul vibrates.

But I fear I have been too prolix in picturing the physical faculties of the blind, who, alas! are generally brought so near that we each have opportunity of studying them at our leisure. But many human souls live near us, so near that we touch elbows with them every day, and yet we do not *know* them. How many Parisians know that large class of men called the Rag-gatherers of Lavallois or of the Maison-Blanche? They pass us daily in the street, they surround us, they go every morning before our doors. It is upon what we throw away that these outcasts live. That which is begun by us is finished by them; that which we consider worn out is still for them full of promise; but we do not know them. We will never know them,—we have not the time.

Possibly some day in taking up a sheet of paper we may have wondered with idle curiosity of what the man was thinking who made the page upon which we write; at what hour —happy or sad,—of his life he worked on that particular piece; or what will be the life of the man whose hands shall gather up that scrap of paper which, having become useless,

we have torn and thrown away ; or, when the friend to whom we send the letter, warm with messages of love, shall have cast it aside with other worthless things. But what idle dreaming ! We have not time to waste thinking of such things. We hurry through our lives,—actually forgetting to *live.* We neglect to study that which perhaps of all things is the most vitally important in life—man. We do not *know* ourselves. It is not strange, therefore, that the blind are so little known, so seldom understood.

CHAPTER II.

THE INTELLECTUAL QUALITIES OF THE BLIND.

Blindness, it is hardly necessary to say, in no way affects the mentality in its development. The paleograph, with his sight dulled by age, may not be able to decipher the yellow parchments of by-gone centuries, but this fact in no degree lessens his interest in the secrets that they have to tell. The intelligence of the happy child who in the excitement of his play thrusts his eye on the point of his mother's scissors, or who receives in his eyes drops of corroding caustic, is not in the least affected intellectually thereby. The child when his wounds are healed—blind though he be—starts with renewed ardor, and the holy father intrenched behind his work quickly recovers himself, and, if he have truly the sacred fire, resumes by other means, but almost always with the same enthusiasm, his work, while the other returns to his play.

What actually have they lost, either of the two,—the child or the man? An instrument, and nothing more. A strong, valuable instrument, I will allow, but is it an indispensable one? I insist that it is not; and it will suffice to recall the names of Milton and Sanderson, Augustus Thierry, Fawcett, George V. of Hanover,[1] and many others which defy contradiction.

In the *Researches on the Human Understanding* by Reid, is a curious and most interesting chapter which shows so fully the possibilities of the blind, that I am strongly tempted to quote it entire. Unfortunately it is too long, but I cannot resist the desire to reproduce a few of the most important passages.

"Sight discloses little that the blind may not be made to understand the reason therefor."

This is the title of the first chapter, and for the blind is a most precious acknowledgment.

[1] "*A propos* of the royal blind may be cited the Prince of Monaco, Charles III., of whom Liegarde has rightly said: 'Here is a subject equally attractive for either pen or pencil. The majesty of his countenance on which suffering had left a melancholy pallor was but the reflection of a soul filled with light. When the night settled down upon his eyes, the night that so quickly sunk into the heart, it seemed as if an aurora arose to take the place of all light that the eyes had lost. Deprived of a beloved companion and left wholly alone, the Prince knew of but one aim, to bring light in the darkness, to bring happiness to his people. From then on reform followed reform, and largess succeeded bounty.'"—STEPHEN LIEGARDE: *La Côte d'Azur.*

"We will readily appreciate the reason of this," says the author, "if we will take the trouble to compare the appearance which an object presents to the eye with the description given of it. I believe that a man born blind may have a very distinct idea, if not of the thing itself, at least of something that closely resembles it," and further, "and of those things, the appearance of which can be only suggested or inferred, while he may not be able actually to picture them to himself, he can nevertheless understand perfectly from the description what they can do, and all the things of which we gain a knowledge by the eye, he may do the same by the ear." Reid then says, "that while a man born blind may not know himself that light exists, he has yet within his own head stars without number," and, he adds, "he may be made to have the clearest conception of it all."

"If," he continues, "it were as unusual to be born with the gift of sight as it now is to be born blind, those who saw would be regarded as extraordinary beings, as prophets inspired to instruct the darkened world, which could nevertheless be made to fully understand. We know that inspiration gives no new faculty. It conveys only in an especial manner and by extraordinary methods what the ordinary faculties of humanity can understand and may communicate to others by the usual way.

"If we admit the supposition that we have assumed, the gift of sight would appear to the congenitally blind as the gift of inspiration does to us, for the small number of those thus gifted may communicate their knowledge if they wish to those less fortunate. In truth they may not be able to give a distinct idea of the way in which they receive their impressions. A little round body stripped of its envelope would seem to be an instrument but illy fitted to develop a science more wonderful than the wildest dreams of fancy."

Relative to appearances, Reid says: "If we observe the operations of the mind in the use we make of this fancy, we will perceive that but little attention is paid to the appearance of visible objects, the appearance does not at all fix the attention, it seems only to reveal other things, and these things that are revealed may be easily and accurately conceived by one born blind."

After giving a number of appearances which are ignored, Reid adds:

"We might cite a thousand other instances which demonstrate that the visible appearances of objects are taken but as indications, and the mind passes rapidly to the thing signified without giving the least attention to the sign itself, and without even noting its existence. In like manner we pay almost no regard to the sounds of a language with which we have become familiar, and our attention is concentrated wholly on the things which they represent. The observation, then, of the Bishop of Cloyne is very important and true, when he says 'that the visible appearance is a kind of language which enables nature at a distance to inform us of the size and shape of things.'"

In a chapter on Visible Appearances, Reid shows that the man who educates only his sight, and forms his judgment of things only from their appearance, is often in his conclusions far from the truth; and the man who does this frequently takes the signs for the things signified. This language being unknown to him, he is wholly unable to comprehend it, and his attention is concentrated upon the signs because he has no conception of what they signify. We, on the other hand, to whom the language is perfectly familiar, take no heed of the signs and devote

our entire attention to the things to be explained. The question being so stated, it will be seen that the blind are deprived of nothing but a perception of the signs, and that every idea is fully accessible to the intelligence, when in fact the eye is reduced to an instrument of perception rather than one of understanding." [1]

In order that the faculties shall remain intact after blindness has come, however, it goes without saying that the loss of sight is not consequent upon disease of the brain, or if so the functions of the brain must be left unimpaired. The cause of blindness and the conditions precedent thereto must also of course be considered, as well as the age at which vision was lost, and on these will largely depend the intellectual condition. It is true that those blind from birth will be always deprived of certain things that sight alone can give, but too frequently these are exaggerated both in number and in importance. Moreover, there are relatively few who are congenitally blind.

I shall have the temerity to maintain that the sense of sight has not the preponderating value that *a priori* we are accustomed to ac-

[1] Works of Thomas Reid, Superintendent of the Scotch School for the Blind.

Of direct interest in this connection is the discussion on "Intelligence" by Taine.

cord to it. Both hearing and touch carry more accurate knowledge than vision. Sight indeed often deceives us, and touch, *the closer sight*, is constantly required to control and correct the wrong impressions conveyed by the eye. Hearing puts a man in direct contact with his fellows, and consequently with the moral and intellectual world.

Read again this page from our old Charron.

"The hearing is the spiritual sense. It is the medium and the agent of understanding; it is the instrument of the wise and the spiritual, capable of penetrating the depths not alone in the individual, but in the species, to which the sight can never reach, making clear things spiritual and divine which sight instead of aiding serves to obscure. Not only have many great savants been blind, but others who have lost their sight were the better able to philosophize thereby, but never one from being deaf. It is through the hearing that we enter the fortress and make ourselves masters. It is the agent of good and evil. It was by the sound of the harp that the wife of King Agamemnon preserved her chastity from many suitors. David by the same means drove out the evil spirits from Saul, and he was restored to health. It was the sound of the flute which softened and strengthened the voice of the great orator Gracchus. In short, science, truth, and virtue have no other pathway by which they may enter the soul but through the ear. The Christian is instructed in his faith by the spoken word, and therein lies his hope of safety. In this sight is of no value to him. 'Faith is the belief in things not seen,' which are acquired

through the ear, and apprentices and novitiates are termed *auditors*, κατηχουμενους. I will add that hearing is our chiefest protection in the darkness and during sleep, and it is then that only by sound is provision made for our protection. For all these reasons the wisest advise that we keep pure and free from all corruption. For our inner safety, like that of a city, we must guard our outer gates and walls that the enemy may not enter."

Touch, taste, and smell, and to even a higher degree hearing, bring him into relation with the world of matter. What, then, does he lack, and what faculties or functions are added to him by the sense of sight? A conception of colors, of perspective and certain physical beauties; and that is all. Aside from these, there are no intellectual conceptions that thorough teaching, and this is imperative, may not convey to even the congenitally blind.

Apropos of colors, I will again cite a passage from the observations of Reid:

"In regard to colors, a man who was born blind must necessarily be embarrassed, as he has nothing with which to compare them. However, by a sort of analogy he may measurably supplement his deficiency. For those who see, the color scarlet signifies an unknown quality in the object which represents to the eye an appearance often observed. . . .

"But it is quite possible to conceive that the eye is affected by different colors as the nose is by different

odors, and the ear by different sounds. It may be conceived that to sight, scarlet differs from blue, as the sound of a trumpet differs from that of a drum, or as the odor of an orange differs from that of an apple. It is impossible to know whether or not scarlet appears to my eyes as it does to those of other men ; and if, as may be, the same colors and sounds are unlike to different people, it will always be impossible for us to know wherein those differences consist. It follows obviously then, that one who has been always blind may yet speak so pertinently of colors, may answer in so satisfactory a way all the questions that could be put to him touching on their nature, their composition, their shades and brilliancy, as to make us forget that he lacks the organ that has given us our knowledge of these things."

If the child have not lost his sight till his eighth or ninth year, and especially if he be mentally bright and normally developed, he is absolutely on a level with those who see, for he will retain an idea of color and perspective, which valuable mental equipments are denied to those who have never seen. I have some reluctance in bringing my own personality into a consideration of this subject, but it is the simplest way, and with your permission I will do so.

I lost my sight when I was nine years of age, and I may say that more than twenty years have passed since I ceased to see. I now take the most lively interest in listening

to discussions on art, perspective, values, harmony of tone, etc. Each year I have described to me the portraits, and the most interesting genre and landscape paintings as they appear, from those of the vaguist impressionists to the most radical realists. I read with care the art criticisms of the various expositions. The description of a picturesque view has the rarest charm for me. It is a pleasure for me to know what may be seen from any spot at which I find myself, the aspect of the country through which I pass, the forms and shades of color of the clouds, and the glories of the sunset. It is not from idle curiosity, but because all of the things of which I speak are clearly pictured in my mind. I may say that being the son of a landscape painter I was brought up in the studio, and many a long hour have I patiently assisted in the mixing of color. The mysteries of perspective have been discussed a hundred times in my hearing; seated at a little table in a corner of the atelier I have myself striven, greatly to the detriment of my paper, to apply the colors. In Cassagne's first book of drawings is a certain mill, known doubtless to many a student, which no effort of mine could by any possible exertion be made to assume the form of any respectable

mill anywhere on the globe. Heaven preserve me, however, from regretting these hours, for now I can picture in my mind a scene as it is described to me, and it seems to me that I have a larger intellectual life the more I identify myself with the impressions of others. I have always vividly represented to my mind the form, the shape, the color, of the things that are spoken of in my hearing, and the scenes described. I have a peculiar fondness for the poetry of Victor Hugo, because of the richness in color of his figures. All of this goes to show, it seems to me, that the most varied ideas may not be foreign to one who has lost his sight in his early childhood. Of the two hearing is certainly the more intellectual of the senses, and I am satisfied that I should have been a thousand times more widely separated from the world of intelligence and life had I lost my hearing than I formerly should have been through the loss of sight. I say formerly with deliberation, because I feel that I am now in possession of an intellectual life, as intense as it is possible for me to enjoy.

I am compelled to say, at the risk of disappointing those who are in search of the philosopher's stone that a love of metaphysics is

not as commonly found in the blind as among those who see. There are, however, blind amateur philosophers who will read perhaps with interest the following unpublished lines, written by the philosopher Azais after a conversation with the professors of the Institution for Blind Youths, Paris.

"Aug. 26, 1842. I have received to-day a visit from M. Dufour, and from two other blind professors. We conversed together for more than three hours. I was greatly pleased by the profound intelligence with which they listened to me. It is marvellous to be so well understood on such deeply philosophic themes by men deprived of the sense of sight, and in consequence, having only incomplete ideas of the effects of light, effects which modify results throughout the universe. Doubtless the perfection with which the sense of hearing and that of touch are developed, aid their intellectual conceptions and enable them to get supplementary notions in harmony with those that they have directly received. This is, however, certain, that in hearing their deeply logical arguments on the most abstract subjects, one would perceive with surprise that he had forgotten that he was talking with blind men. They followed in the smallest detail the argument and its demonstration. I have never experienced, in conversing with men who saw, a more intellectual satisfaction, nor found their ideas more definite, more suggestive, nor more fully expressed."

Intellectual mediocrity, that mediocrity of a colorless, indifferent quality that characterizes the vast majority of human kind, largely pre-

dominates among the blind, and though brilliant examples of genius are not uncommon, they necessarily form the rare exception.

All that appeals to the imagination, however, has a singular fascination for the blind. Historical records, travels, and purely literary works excite greater interest, I am inclined to believe, in the blind than in those who see. In our special schools, courses in history, in geography, and literature are followed by those who have most moderate intellectual gifts with very unusual ardor. The blind are extremely fond of listening to reading aloud, and I wish that we might have the teachers in the vicinity of the poorer quarters of the city charged to give public readings for the blind, say twice each week. It would not be necessary to ring a bell in order to secure a good attendance.

When we read in our special schools from Thiers of the Italian or French Campagnes, when we are at the heart of *Jerusalem Delivered*, when we follow the fortunes of Cinna or Britannicus, one could hear the step of a mouse, and with the exception of a few poor imbeciles who were sleeping quietly, every hearer is held in willing captivity.

One who reads well may do what he will

with his blind auditors. He has a most powerful wand, and no one can break the charm. Poetry, however, is one of the idolatries of the blind. More than two thirds of their raised print works are collections of verse. I have often remarked that the blind have actually a passion for poetry. Happy, indeed, when this passion may be satisfied by copying and memorizing the lines of others. It is a public calamity when their emotion can find vent only in versifying themselves. Not that I would throw stones at those who rhyme. I would certainly be attacking many honest souls. But it appears to me that none are justified in writing in verse unless they have been truly touched by the divine fire. It may be noted that I do not practise the same exclusiveness in regard to prose!

I believe that the blind, however, may be poets, and great poets. This has been contested. It has been said: "It is impossible that the poetry of the blind shall be true poetry, because they are shut out from grandest spectacles of nature, which chiefly fire the poetic imagination." But does there not still remain the entire domain of the moral life? Is it not a vast field? He who has explored it to the end, may he not well be crowned?

And then, if there be poetry in that which we see, may it not also be found in what we touch, and in what we hear? The essence of poetry penetrates into sounds and odors with a sort of magnetism, at certain times and seasons; it may be in the forest or on the mountain, by the seaside or the brook. Impressions come at such times with an intensity that sets our very being in vibration, and, without knowing how or why, so perfect is our harmony with our surroundings that all unconsciously we break into songs of joy, or of love, gladness, or of sorrow, and this emotion can be nothing other than poetry of the truest kind.

Doubtless the blind man who undertakes to picture for us a sunset, or a landscape, makes it ridiculous if in prose, unbearable in verse. But read over and again the descriptive lines of Lamartine, and you will realize that there are varied phases of nature which are wholly accessible to the blind.

It is told that La Motte-Houdard, who became blind at an early age, said to a young poet who had come to read to him one of his tragedies: "Your play is exceedingly beautiful, and I can promise for its success. I am pained by one thing, however, and that is that

you have been guilty of plagiarism." "What, sir, of plagiarism?" was the astonished exclamation. "Yes! And to prove how sure I am of what I say, I will recite for you the second scene of the fourth act, which I have learned by heart." La Motte recited this scene without the change of a single word. Every one listened with astonishment without knowing what to say. The author was even more disconcerted than the rest. When the wonderful old poet had sufficiently enjoyed the embarrassment of the young author, he said to him: "Be not distressed, my dear fellow; the scene which I have recited is entirely yours, but it fully deserves to be memorized by every lover of poetry: I made it my own as I heard you read it." This was certainly a remarkable feat of memory. Was it through his blindness, you ask, that La Motte had acquired this wonderful faculty? I doubt it very much. He had doubtless a special genius of the kind that enabled Pliny the Elder to repeat a long series of numbers, having no connection with each other, and which he had heard read but once or twice. But this is very sure, that the necessity that compels the blind to entrust many things to memory is calculated to largely develop that

faculty in them. It seems to me that the blind students of this age do not accomplish the prodigious feats with which we are familiar by tradition. I know, however, an old blind professor who carries in his mind numerous musical compositions of various kinds; and another, a woman, who knows by heart a whole throng of classic tragedies, and remembers after a single reading the most complicated passages, and the most inextricable plots of political or diplomatic history.

There was a time when the blind wrote but little. In their instruction the oral method was much more commonly employed than the written, and without doubt the deprivation of books, the fact that the professor should know his text by heart, and the student learn his task from the mouth of his teacher, made necessary for both master and pupil an effort of memory that they are not obliged to make to-day. Notwithstanding this, although the blind are now compelled to use the memory more than those who see, as a rule they do use it only ordinarily well.

CHAPTER III.

THE MORAL QUALITIES OF THE BLIND.

To characterize the blind morally is not an easy task. The reason is simple. Not more than any other class of individuals grouped because of physical peculiarities,—as near- or far-sightedness,—and aside from personality, modified by occupation or environment, do the blind constitute a class having qualities in common, and no single one gives a truthful idea of the class from which he has been taken.

You have doubtless often had pictured for you with pen or pencil what might be considered a composite portrait of the blind, and I might feel justified not only in assuming that such a sketch must be inaccurate and untrue, but in offering to replace it by a more faithful likeness. I might endeavor honestly to do this, but I should just as certainly fail as any who have tried before. My portrait would perhaps be an exact reproduction of some blind man; it could never represent the abstract blind.

We will go, if you please, into one of the special schools, and study the pupils at their work; for here, perhaps, more than elsewhere, will we find them unhampered by conventionalities and most at home.

Look at this blind boy, for instance, with his frank, open face. His masters say that he is a gentle, lovable, companionable fellow. His neighbor on the right, with a shock of stiff black hair, as unkempt as the rules of the school will permit, has a positive, rather sullen face, and any one will tell you, from the porter to the superintendent of the school, that he is self-contained, brusque, and rough. The boy on the left of the first pupil, however, is widely different from either of these. Here are but three of many. Take ten or twenty, and the same differences will be prominent. We may arrange them in groups having general points of resemblance, but the differences will be infinite when we recognize the thousand shades that make up an individuality. A good writer will find a dozen words that are synonyms; but a discriminating observer will encounter shades of difference in apparent likeness, more numerous in humanity even than in language.

The blind, like all minorities, have been

synonymized to excess. Most of those who have written concerning them have proceeded from preconceived theories, and have made their subjects adapt themselves to inflexible Procrustean notions. A principle having been proposed, they deduce from it a multitude of conclusions, from which there is no escape. Certain philosophers have said that all thought emanates from the senses, and consequently the loss of one sense more or less changes the individual in his entirety. It has been decided, always from theory, that the blind, lacking one of the senses, must think and feel and act in accordance with certain established ideas. The conclusion is absolute, without appeal, and universal in its application, as are all the conclusions of those whose deductions are drawn from theory rather than from observation.

Let us in our consideration of this matter leave the assumed fundamental principles of knowledge and establish ourselves simply on a groundwork of facts.[1] Facts are the demand of to-day, and these, to be valuable, must be studied scientifically. In the past the blind have been analyzed and scheduled after this

[1] This is a grave question. If it be true that blindness produces consequences as radical in the moral and intellectual sphere as in the physical such as to annihilate the perception of light, then are the blind radically different from those who see, and must be so regarded.

manner, but as one reads the result of such investigations it becomes evident that they have been studied as curious phenomena, or as wild animals, and not as living and emotional beings. The intelligent assistance of the object studied has not been employed to aid in these investigations, but in order to demonstrate the skill and power of induction of their delineators, and the blind must play the principal rôle. Hours will be spent in the consideration of this or that movement, and every action will be carefully watched and noted. From these data, examined at leisure, inferences are drawn and conclusions reached. This is all very good, but the result is always abundantly admixed with error. There remains for this method no other procedure. When they undertake, on the other hand, to study *men*, whether they see or whether they do not see, it is a far different matter. They are then in the presence of an intelligent being, and it concerns them to remember this. It is better undoubtedly that the investigation be sometimes conducted silently and unconsciously to its subject, who may then be surprised in acts detected in all of their spontaneity. But this method must not be considered except as preparatory to, or in verification of, more serious

and more exact observations, which must be made with the active concurrence of the moral being observed. That this may be done one must see him for a long time, must live with him, must enter into his life, inquire of him, converse with him socially, to the end that he shall be known as he is, and not merely as he appears upon the surface. The observations must be carried over a large number of individuals. Then, only, may one hope to know one's subject experimentally, and that with the blind, for example, all of their characteristics in many and various shades may be discovered and recognized.

If you have ever read half a dozen lines written by the class of observers referred to, you will have seen the affirmations that the blind are egotistical, proud, self-contained, or it may be that they are happy or they are sad. I deny most positively such statements, not because there is little in them complimentary to their subjects, but because it is certainly quite as reasonable to say that the blind are large, or that they are small, they are light or dark, or poor or rich. I condemn absolutely such comprehensive generalizations. It must be admitted that there are among the blind those who are proud, or who are egotistical,

and I will willingly supplement this list with a multitude of adjectives far less flattering to the substantives which they qualify.

But the important point to make clear is this: We have noted in the blind certain marked defects. Are these due to the fact of their being blind, and might it not be possible for the blind not to have them? In a word, has blindness the inevitable faculty of making those who suffer from it proud, egotistical, self-sufficient, and ungrateful? That is the question. I unhesitatingly say No! And the reason for my belief is this: Too large a number of blind children, like those mentally deficient, while most tenderly cared for in their homes, are most deplorably educated. We must look here then to find that the unlovely qualities which are given as a birth-right to all children, to those who are blind as to those who see, are allowed to develop and are the cause of the defects of which we have spoken. They are due to deficient or injudicious training, and to this alone.

It is exceptional indeed, much as it is to be regretted, that blind children, whether among the poor or the rich, have been properly educated. Sometimes they are neglected, and pushed aside, and then they suffer either mate-

rially or morally, and in a majority of instances both materially and morally. Sometimes, on the other hand, they are spoiled by petting and excessive indulgence. Each member of the family is on his feet, anxious to gratify the blind child's slightest whim.[1] They have constant excuses for his greatest follies, and all that he does even ordinarily well receives most lavish praise. How could it be possible for a child under such conditions to be other than intensely disagreeable? Would not similar training produce in the most lovable child, blessed with two good eyes, identical results? It must not then be said that blindness causes pride and all other faults, but rather that blindness is not a talisman that will guard against the common failings of humanity.

It is an ungrateful task to speak of those who are merely commonplace, in whom is found nothing of the marvellous. The wonderful always fascinates, whether it be good or evil. A writer is saved if he may only say: "Those of whom I write are most extraordinary prodigies." Without this, in fact, why

[1] In an educational novel, now almost forgotten, by Madame Guizot, appears an excellent portrait of a blind child, of a naturally sweet and winning disposition, but rendered absolutely unbearable by the foolish indulgences of an over-fond mother. See *The Student, or Ravul and Victor*, by Mme. Guizot.

should one speak, or still less, why should one write of them at all?

The blind, perhaps more than most people, have a love of order, at least in the disposition of the furniture and movable objects around the room. But in little affairs, if I know among the blind those who are methodical, I know others also who have so little system as to make wildly jealous the most disorderly of those who see. The necessity for system is impressed upon the blind at every turn they make. As a book or other object cannot be seen it must be searched for, and in order that the furniture may not be stumbled over, orderly habits become imperative.

A house that is always disarranged is agreeable to no one. It is peculiarly embarrassing for the blind, who are obliged to move carefully and hesitatingly if chairs and tables are constantly displaced.

Diderot, in his famous *Lettres sur les Aveugles*, said of the blind Puyseau, the only blind man studied by him, and from whom he has deduced all of his theories, that he worked by night, that he might not be disturbed, and that in the morning his wife found everything in perfect order. To me this demonstrates

but one of two things: First, that this blind Puyseau was an odd sort of fellow, with whom I would prefer not to live; or, second, his wife must have been a virago, and only in the night could the poor devil of a distiller find sufficient quiet to make his liquors.

Blindness develops the faculty of observation. When one cannot see and is obliged to draw in large part therefore upon the other faculties, he must analyze and examine more in detail all of the impressions that are conveyed to his other senses. This develops a mental alertness in many, and together with it frequently a gravity of demeanor that may pass for wisdom.

It is very generally admitted that the blind as a class are a happy, cheerful people, while the deaf, on the other hand, are generally sad. But to those who know the blind well it is evident that the gayety so commonly remarked is rather subjective than objective. Let me explain. When we see the blind together we expect, do we not, to find them lugubrious and sad, deploring in continual and tearful elegies the unhappiness of being deprived of the magnificent spectacle of the azure vault above, of the sun, and the moon, and the stars, and of all else that enters into a classical descrip-

tion of nature? We come to them then prepared to pity and console. In reality, however, we meet with nothing of the kind. We find ourselves in the presence of a child, or it may be a man who talks with us on every subject under the sun except his blindness, and this occurs to him only at times, as for instance when something round escapes from his fingers and he has difficulty in finding it again. As a result the natural surprise and the excess of sympathetic tenderness which is not called, into requisition lead us to look upon the blind, as a class, as of joyous disposition.

Very often, too, a parallel is established between the happiness of the blind and the sadness of the deaf. And may this not also be explained in the same way? The first impression of the deaf-mute is, as a rule, much more pleasing than is that of the blind. A visitor who for the first time enters a school of deaf-mutes and a school for the blind will find much less that is unusual in the former than in the latter. The deaf children are physically not unlike other children. You approach the deaf without apprehension, for there is no outward mark to indicate their infirmity. It is unusual that the defect of the blind is not at once evident. Almost always the lids are partially

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1893

The Blind as seen
Through Blind
Eyes

closed or the eyes enlarged or atrophied, and the impression produced is one of sadness or of pity. But this first impression is quickly dissipated, because the more intimately you know the blind the more quickly are you put at your ease, and you feel the barrier disappear that is separating you. If your blind acquaintance prove to be a man of intelligence you end by forgetting his blindness completely in the interest of your conversation. With the deaf-mute, on the other hand, the impressions are reversed. The longer you remain in his presence the more his deafness weighs on you. It is intolerable to converse with one who talks much; it cannot be much less painful if he does not talk at all, or is merely deaf and compels you to repeat every word before he can understand you at all. If the results are compared you will, implicitly at least, make brevet generals of gayety of the blind *en masse.*

The fact is that the blind are not by reason of their blindness levelled down to an equalization of character. Those who live with them will find all kinds of humors, the melancholy and the serious, the happy and the careless. I think that I may say that I know them well and intimately; those of all ages, of all social conditions, and of the most varied characteris-

tics. I know some who are of the finest fibre, with the loveliest dispositions, delicately organized, perfectly attuned, who are loved by all who know them. I know others who are waspish, pretentious, unlovely, and unloved. There are those who are gentle, and those who are passionate, those who are modest, rarely speaking of themselves, and others who are talkative and absorbed in their own personality.

In a word, we will find among the blind the same varied characteristics and qualities as among those who see, neither more nor less, and I trust that those who, with me, grant without the slightest hesitancy that the blind are not by nature worth more than other men, will with equal readiness believe me when I affirm that they are not worth less.

Have I succeeded in giving a just idea of the physical, of the mental, and of the moral attributes of the blind? Can I hope that if to-morrow one of my readers should see coming to him a blind man who has been well educated he will not have an apprehension of finding himself face to face with an extraordinary being in every respect, necessarily awkward, clumsy, embarrassed, and embarrassing, one who is gloomy, rude, unfeeling, unthinking,

unreasoning, not speaking as others do, a being having a material, a moral, and an intellectual life altogether singular? One who in a word could inspire one's curiosity or one's compassion, but to whom one must always give, and from whom one could receive nothing useful nor pleasant except his thanks—on the condition that he be not ungrateful? If, then, I have succeeded in restoring to the blind their just estate, I may be followed into the interior of a blind school without apprehension, but before we study *what* the blind are taught, we will first see *how* they are instructed.

We will not touch on the instruction of the blind, however, without first speaking of the revered founder of schools for the blind, Valentine Haüy, and I believe it will be both interesting and profitable to sketch the portrait of that grand old philanthropist.

PART II.

VALENTINE HAÜY AND HIS WORK.[1]

CHAPTER I.

HIS CHILDHOOD AND EARLY LIFE.

WHEN in Paris, if you go through the Boulevard des Invalides by the Seine to the Great Britain Station, you pass a long row of high monotonous walls which discreetly conceal the gardens of the numerous charitable and educational institutions of this quarter. A grating cuts off the last of these wearisome walls, and discloses to view a large court, in the centre of which is a life-size statue. It represents, in a standing attitude, a man of perhaps forty years of age. His hair is gathered in a knot, and

[1] This is a portrait, not a history, of Valentine Haüy. For a long time I have been accumulating numerous unpublished documents relative to this great philanthropist. At a future time I may complete this sketch.—M. S.

his clothing is in the French fashion of a century ago. Before him is a child, and under the group the words:

Valentine Haüy, 1745–1822.

Do not carelessly pass it by. Honor the man providentially provided for the uplifting of the blind.

In a town of Picardy—St. Just-en-Chaussée—was born the subject of this sketch. His father, who was a weaver, was poor, and two years before had baptized another son, René-Just, the creator of crystallography. The good weaver sounded the Angelus at the daily curfew, to supplement his scanty earnings. Brave and strong also was his wife, but without the generous assistance of neighbors it is doubtful that the two little boys would ever have learned more than the management of the parental shuttle.

In the suburbs of St. Just was the Abbey of Prémontre's, and often the little René assisted in the performance of the sacred offices, which were very beautiful. The thoughtful attitude and the pretty intelligent face of the child attracted the attention of the worthy prior, who himself assumed the responsibility of the child's education.

Valentine took promptly the road to the same school, and the two boys worked diligently. St. Just was only twenty leagues from Paris, and they were enabled, thanks to their devoted mother, and with many commendations from their friends, to finish their studies at the capital.

At the age of twenty-one René was master of the fourth class at the college of Cardinal Lemoine, where he became intimately attached to the good Lhomond. Valentine, aided by the modest assistance of his brother, studied the modern languages and penmanship. He succeeded in gaining a livelihood by giving lessons and translating the business correspondence of foreigners.

This was at a time when a philosophical humanitarianism was the order of the day. Every one was looking for and adopting all manner of social regenerations. Rousseau and Diderot were mounted on pedestals. Their words were taken as oracular utterances. The *Letters on the Blind*—much read and much commented upon—especially tended to make the blind conspicuous. The public had also become interested in the deaf-mutes, because, doing better than philosophize, the Abbé de l'Épée had established near St. Roch the first school for deaf-mutes.

The founding of the Philanthropical Society dates also from this period.

In the first notice of this society, published in 1785, may be read the following lines:

"The Philanthropical Society is an organization composed of such benevolent persons as may be moved by a union of their efforts and their means to aid the poor and suffering. One of the first impulses that Nature has put in the hearts of all men of every land and of every class and cult, is an involuntary desire to help the unhappy and unfortunate. In conformity with this sentiment one of the first duties of man is to better the condition of his fellows, to increase their happiness and to diminish their woes, and by so doing to lessen the crimes and miseries that are too frequently the result of neglect and despair. Most surely like objects govern the policies of all nations, and *philanthrope* is the most suitable designation for the member of a society the especial function of which is to urge the performance of the first duty of citizenship." Assistance was given, first, to octogenarians; second, to the congenitally blind; third, to women giving birth to their sixth legitimate child; fourth, to widows or widowers having the care of six legitimate children; fifth, to fathers and mothers having the care of nine children; sixth, to crippled workmen."

Valentine Haüy, tender-hearted and generous, with a somewhat Utopian spirit, was in every regard a child of the age, as characteristic in his costume as in his writing. In 1780 he could be nothing other than philanthropist with Lavalette, de Langes, le Vicomte de

Tavannes, Lecamus de Pontcarré,[1] and others, as in 1796 he must be a theophilanthropist with Chemin-Dupontès, Dupont (de Nemours), Bernardin de Saint-Pierre and La Révellière-Lépeaux. In him Abbé l'Épée had a most attentive listener, a profound admirer, almost a disciple. Soon he was to have an emulator.

The sacred fire smouldered in the soul of the bureaucrat; it must suffer a shock before it would spring forth a living spark.

In 1771 St. Ovid's Fair[2] was the chiefest popular attraction. Daily at this time when the crowds were greatest, one of the booths had been mounted by a certain Valindin, an *impressario* of genius after his style, whose success had marked these public shows.[3] Valindin had gathered together a number of blind men, whom he had given in charge of a crowd of rowdies. These fellows were so enthusiastically enjoying the sport that they would have demolished the booths in their exuberance, so that it became necessary to organize a cordon of guards for protection.

[1] See *Centennial History of the Philanthropical Society*, by M. le Vicomte d'Haussonville, 1880, Paris.

[2] *Calendar of the Sights of the Boulevards and Fairs of Paris*, published in Paris by Valeyre, 1773.

[3] This fair was first held at Place Louis-le-Grand (Place Vendome) and was afterward taken to Place Louis XV.

Valentine Haüy saw the exhibition. He followed the throng, and here, depicted by himself, is the scene which he beheld, and the impression which it made.[1]

"It is now thirty years since this outrage to humanity was perpetrated in the persons of these blind men of the Quinze-Vingts, and was repeated almost every day for almost two months, exciting the laughter of gaping crowds, who probably had never experienced the sweet emotions of tenderness and pity.

"In the month of September, 1771, they had placed in a café at St. Ovid's Fair, six men, chosen from those who were reduced to the humiliating necessity of begging their daily bread; and to attract attention and to excite public sympathy, they employed an instrument which if the hearer were gifted with a musical ear, and even more if he had a tender heart, would drive him from the inharmonious sounds, that were designed to gain a reward of talent. These men had been grotesquely costumed in robes and long-pointed hats. On their noses they had put huge paste-board spectacles without glasses. Placed before a desk on which were music and lights, they executed a monotonous chant in which the tenors, the bases, and the violins all took the same part. There was nothing to palliate the insult that they had put upon these unfortunates, who were surrounded by emblems of the grossest ignorance, as, for instance, in placing behind their leader

[1] M. Pasteur has said: "There is a time in the history of every man which cannot be forgotten, when with a full heart and a soul elevated by noble emotion he has realized the mystery of life with such a mingling of pride and gratitude that for the remainder of his existence its memory is as vivid as on the day at which it occurred."

the expanded tail of a peacock, and on his brow the head-dress of Midas.

"Why was it that a scene so dishonorable to humanity did not perish the instant of its conception? Why was it that poetry and picture[1] should lend their divine ministration to the publication of this atrocity? Ah! it was without doubt, that the scene reproduced before my eyes, and carrying into my heart a profound sorrow might inspire and arouse my soul. Yes, I said to myself, seized by an exalted enthusiasm, I will substitute the truth for this mocking parody *I will make the blind to read! I will put in their hands volumes printed by themselves. They will trace the true characters and will read their own writing, and they shall be enabled to execute harmonious concerts.* Yes, atrocious maligner, whomsoever thou art, the ears of the ass, with which thou would'st degrade the head of misfortune, shall be attached to thine own."[2] 7

[1] There is on sale by Mondhar, rue Saint Jaques, a print representing this caricature, with the subjoined description: "Grand Concert, given by members of the Quinze-Vingts at the Café of the Blind, at St. Ovid's Fair, September, 1771. The blind men, dressed in a most comical way, play a variety of instruments, violins, bass viols, etc., with enormous spectacles placed on the noses of the musicians. On either side are lighted candles, and before them sheet music put on racks, with the notes turned toward the spectators, making a most amusing exhibition. Underneath is a sketch of a blind man led by a dog, with a chapel in the background, with descriptive lines in verse.

[2] In a note, citizen Haüy, author of the *Method of Instruction for the Blind*, in a short history of the birth, development, and present condition of the National Institute for Blind Workmen, on the 19 Brumaire, and the IX. of the French Republic, interpolates a remark relative to this institution, signed: "Haüy, Founder of the National Institute for Blind Workmen, Member of the Jury of Public Instruction, and Interpreter for all the Governments that have successively ruled France."

In making this exhibition, Valindin had merely designed to increase the sales of his inn by attracting the idle loungers in the vicinity. He had unconsciously been the agent employed by Providence in raising up a regenerator for the blind. When Valentine Haüy went out from the fair of St. Ovid, the way had been discovered.

CHAPTER II.

FIRST BOOK IN RELIEF—THE FIRST SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND.

LONG was the period of incubation! More than ten years passed during which Haüy with a sense of the practical rare with enthusiasts, occupied his time by inquiring into the methods employed by the few privileged blind who had succeeded in acquiring instruction. Finally feeling himself ready to pass from the theoretical to the practical, near the Pentecostal season of 1784, he took his first pupil from the porch of *St. Germain des Prés.* There, holding out his hand to all who passed, from the time of the opening of the gates, stood a young blind boy, François Lesueur, and his bright, intelligent face seemed painfully out of place in the performance of so sad a rôle. The boy suffered in his pitiable position, but he received the Master's word,

and believed that under the guidance of Providence he was fulfilling his rightful mission.

But François had not himself only to consider; there were also the old and somewhat infirm father and mother, and several young children, and the gifts of charity were taken at once to the poor little garret that they all called home. Impossible then for the provider to neglect the source of supply and adopt the life of a student, to desert the church door that he might enter the school. A compromise, however, was effected. In the morning François remained faithful at his post; the afternoon he passed with Haüy. But soon the latter, anxious to have his pupil for the entire day, himself undertook to replenish the boy's *sébile* from his own meagre savings. Not the least curious phase of this arrangement was to see the master paying for the instruction of his own pupil.

"There is nothing so easy," Biot has said, "as that which was discovered yesterday; and nothing more difficult than that which will be discovered to-morrow." The value of printing in relief is so obvious as to excite surprise that it was not sooner suggested. Lesueur began by moving the fingers over individual raised characters and groups forming words and

phrases. The process was extremely rudimentary, and it took but little to form a library.

One day while Lesueur was assorting the papers on his teacher's desk[1] he came across a card of invitation which, strongly indented by the types in the press, had retained in relief an imprint of certain characters. Proud of his work, the blind lad called his master and showed him that he could decipher several letters on the card. It was a ray of light to the ever-wakeful mind of Haüy. Immediately he traced with the handle of his pen some signs upon the same page. Lesueur recognized them without hesitation. Impression in relief, the greatest of Haüy's discoveries, was made. He did not rest until he had completed after much groping the practical application of the process; but the search for the accessories, and the perplexities of the inventor, are not recounted in history.

Lesueur made rapid progress. It was certainty replacing hope. The blind remained however, for a long time without instruction even after means had been devised through which they might acquire it.

[1] See *Notice sur l'Établissement des Jeunes Aveugles*, "Relief print at the Quinze-Vingts, by M. Galliod, former pupil of the late Valentine Haüy, inventor of this process for the education of the youthful blind," Paris, 1828, p. 5.

Haüy undertook to form a school, for this one pupil was not enough. This one might be a prodigy—a phenomenon. That the blind could be taught had not been proven. One fact was not conclusive. The philanthropical society to which reference has been made gave assistance to twelve octogenarians, twelve widows or widowers, twelve of either sex who were blind, and twenty-five parturient women. Haüy asked and obtained permission to take the blind beneficiaries to his home. Before gaining the approval of the philanthropists it was important to have that of the savants It was just at this period the Abbé, Valentine Haüy's brother, came to enter the Academy of Sciences.

While Valentine was puzzling over the correspondence of the foreign merchants, watching with interest the work of the Abbé de l'Épée for the deaf, and dreaming of methods of bettering the condition of the blind, his brother René-Just, together with the sweet Lhomond, were initiating the pupils of Cardinal Lemoine in the mysteries of *que retranché.*

Then in his leisure moments, and to please his distinguished friend, Abbé Haüy devoted his attention to the study of plants. From

botany he happened to become interested in mineralogy, and through crystallography came the discovery which made him famous.

"Dropping a piece of fluor spar on the floor he noticed with curiosity and interest that the broken pieces retained a regularity and constancy of form. Led by this fortunate accident he created a new science to which his name has been attached, that of *crystallography*.

"Immediately he found himself the centre of observation, notwithstanding his native modesty and rather unattractive personality. His first lectures before the Academy created a sensation, and the savants hastened to claim him.

"Cuvier informs us that it was by no means easy to prevail on the modest Abbé to deliver his lectures. The Academy seemed to the good regent of Cardinal Lemoine a sort of *terra incognita*, and he was actually afraid of it in his timid apprehension.

"The customary usages of the Academy were so little known to him that he came to his first lecture in the long clerical garb that the Church prescribed, but which, it is said, had long before been discarded by ecclesiastics in society when not engaged in religious functions. In that volatile age some of his friends feared that his costume might not only render it difficult for him to speak under the circumstances, but might compel him to actually run away from his audience, for this was one of the traits of his character. They called in counsel in their difficulty, a doctor of the Church from Sorbonne. 'The old canons are profoundly to be respected,' said he, 'but when one appears before the Academy he then becomes an Academician.' Their anxiety, it is fair to presume, was unnecessary, for in their enthusiasm to secure him as one

of their Fellows they quickly decided that he might appear in any costume he chose."[1]

For experimental purposes the pacific Abbé broke without remorse many exquisite specimens that were willingly given to him for that purpose. Rome Delisle, jealous of his discoveries, attacked him with vigor, designating him the crystalloclast. But such Byzantine abuse did not interrupt the progress of the simple-minded priest. Overcome by the honors heaped upon him, the humble regent of Cardinal Lemoine found his humble cell invaded by his new confrères, Laplace, Lagrange, Lavoisier, Fourcroy, Berthollet, De Morveau, and others no less renowned, who listened attentively while he explained to them his theories of crystallization.

The scientific work of the Abbé contributed not a little to the advancement of his brother's projects for the blind. Valentine's pedagogic essays were submitted to the Academy and warmly approved.[2] But this was not enough. He must reach a larger audience—that of the

[1] "Historical Eulogy on M. René-Just Haüy," by Cuvier, June 2, 1823, from a collection of *Historical Eulogies* read in the meetings and published by the Royal Institute of France, by Baron Cuvier, one of the Forty of the French Academy.

[2] See report made to the Academy of Sciences by the Duke de la Rochefoucauld, Feb. 16, 1785.

public. He must awaken their sympathy and unloose their purse strings. The struggle for existence now began, and was maintained through five long, wearisome years.

The age was somewhat less refined than it is to-day, but the art of advertising existed nevertheless, and Haüy knew how to make it serve him. He exhibited his pupils in writing rooms and other places of meeting. On Wednesday and Saturday regularly, and on one other day at their pleasure, at the school, 18 rue Nôtre-Dame-des-Victoires, and finally at the Court at Versailles, where his pupils were invited for the Christmas festivities in 1786. This proved to be a great success.

The following is taken from a communication in the *Paris Journal* of January 1, 1787:

"Agreeable to the wishes of the King, the 26th had been fixed upon as the date of the exercises. Twenty-four blind children were brought from the *Philanthropic Home* into the royal presence. The King and Queen, together with all the members of the royal household, had graciously expressed their approval of the teacher and his remarkable pupils. A blind boy listened to and corrected the reading of one who could see. False orthography was recognized and re-written properly in raised prints. Geographical relations were pointed out by Lesueur, the first blind professor, both with and without the aid of cards in relief. Quite difficult fractions were reduced to the same common denominator with such

a degree of exactitude that the Duke d'Angoulême, to the infinite amusement of the court, sat pen in hand and worked out the problems with them. The pupils then presented to the King and Royal family a book printed by themselves (*Essay on the Education of the Blind*), with an ode, composed by Monsieur Houard, one of themselves, followed by models of all their little printed works which had been executed under the careful instruction of M. Clousier, printer to his Majesty, who was second only to Haüy himself in his unselfish and disinterested zeal for the welfare of the blind. [Signed by] *A Philanthropist who was present at the exercises on the 26th.*"

In the same journal, on January the 8th, the following appeared :

"Jan'y 4th, 1787. Gentlemen : I could not too strongly express my appreciation of the philanthropist who was moved to inform you by his letter of Jan'y 1st that the King, Queen, and Royal family had graciously deigned to be present at the exercises of the blind children. But this estimable gentleman will permit me to add, I am sure, to what he has said that their hand-work in the trades proved quite as interesting and instructive. It was observed with pleasure that the crude hemp developed successively in their dextrous fingers as thread and then as well-made cord. This was used by them in making netting and other knotted work, and woven bands. Their skill in making webbing, taking measures, and book-binding was especially noted in the hope that some of these might serve as resources in earning a livelihood by this class of unfortunates."

"I take advantage of this circumstance, sirs," he continues, "to announce to you that the blind children will

return to their exercises at Rue Nôtre-Dame-des-Victoires by Wednesday the 10th inst., and may be visited on Wednesday and Saturday at noon, and on other days at such time as may be arranged for. I have the honor, etc. [Signed] *Haüy, Interpreter for the King.*"

Louis XVI. complimented Haüy, and promised him the first insignia of the Order of St. Michael that should be within his gift. Alas! we must believe that the oldest incumbent lasted longer than the King, for the cordon never came.

Haüy instructed his pupils in vocal and in instrumental music, and Gossec, the most noted musician of the day, composed masses for the little blind orchestra, the words of the chorus being written by one of the pupils of the school. It is from one of these hymns in eulogy of their master that the stanzas are taken which are frequently joined in exergue to the portrait of Haüy.

"The Arts and the Virtues from him took their torch
To give light to the Blind from the base of his tomb."

With an audacity that could give an assumption of moral bravery only to novitiates in music, Haüy led his little orchestra with its feeble chorus composed of children who had been born blind, through the aisles and under

the vast arches of the Eustache.[1] At the procession of Corpus Christi they played in this porch what were termed the "*marches chantantes.*"

At St. Roch and other churches they sang the masses to their own accompaniment. When, in 1789, Louis XVI. returned to Paris without his musicians-in-ordinary, Haüy made application and secured for his blind orchestra a position in the chapel of the Tuileries.

[1] On this occasion the Archbishop of Paris gave authority to the young blind girls to chant the offices in the churches.

CHAPTER III.

THE SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND DURING THE REVOLUTION.

DURING the Revolution Valentine continued to keep his musicians in sight. The work must be continued, or soon, because of the many interruptions, it would cease entirely. For this reason it must be kept constantly before the public eye at any price. The Reign of Terror came. Haüy, more than ever the leader and guide of the blind, quickly changed his programmes and places of exhibition. Gossec no longer wrote *motets*, but patriotic hymns. From St. Eustache the choir was taken on civic holidays to the National Academy of Music, and in place of the *marches chantantes* on the feast of Corpus Christi, they mounted the chairs of the deposed officials. So it came that on the day of the *Fête de l'Etre Suprême*, June 8, 1794, that famous day for which David so beautifully and artis-

tically arranged the programme, the blind protégés of Haüy took active and prominent part.

"Aurora announces the beginning of day, and immediately the sound of martial music is heard on all sides, following the repose of sleep by an enchanting awakening. The appearance of a beneficent star, giving life and color to all nature, to friends and brothers, husbands and wives, to old men and children, inspires all with ennobling impulses and a desire to join in the celebration of the Fête of the Divine Father of All. Tricolor floats from the houses, while the porticos are decorated with festoons of living verdure. In the doorway stands a woman, by her side her young daughter whose waving tresses are mingled with flowers, and on her arm the babe at her breast. The son, vigorous and strong, is seated upon his arms, and refuses to receive his belt except from the hands of his father. The old man, smiling with pleasure while his eyes are wet with tears of joy, is young again as he presents the sword to the defenders of his liberty." *From the Programme of the Fête de l'Être Suprême, arranged by David, and decreed for June 8, 1794.*

They formed part of the cortége that followed Robespierre, and his pallid features were unlighted even on that occasion. "With a heart overflowing with love and gentleness," says Vilate,[1] "he walked clothed in the garments of the people, carrying in his hand a bouquet of flowers mixed with ripened wheat."

[1] See first note of Citizen Haüy, author of *A Method of Instruction for the Blind*, in response to unfavorable insinuations in the Society of Political Conduct.

It is for participation in these ceremonials that the good Valentine Haüy has been taxed with terrorism; and in that he had been received and lionized at Versailles and the Tuileries, and later had visited Louis XVIII. at Mittau, he has also been charged with duplicity. In this, however, he is wronged.

On the 19 Brumaire of the year, XI. Valentine Haüy, after being sharply attacked, penned the following lines:

"When a citizen is called upon to appear before those in high places, it is not unusual to find those stationed near at hand who constantly cry out, 'Distrust this man, he is a Royalist and a fanatic,' or, 'Avoid that one, for he is a terrorist!' Rarely is one found who is broad enough to answer: 'What matters it? He has honesty and ability. He does not alter his countenance, nor his conduct, nor his opinion with every change brought about by the Revolution.'

"Forced to adopt the measures that advance the sciences and arts,—the glory of my country and defence of humanity, it is my first duty to guide public opinion till those misled by false notions may be led to recognize and support the true; and that I may do this I will briefly narrate the principal features of my political life during the Reign of Terror."

The gentle-minded philanthropist could not have harmed an insect. It is true that he signed himself "Interpreter for All the Gov-

ernments which have successively Ruled France."[1] But he was, it appears to me, a sceptic in politics, and I fully believe that if he had attempted to describe the attitude of his establishment during the Revolution, he would have said: "I have succeeded in keeping alive the work for the blind, and it is already grown great." In fact, the National Assembly,[2] and later the Convention,[3] generous enough with words, had proclaimed Haüy's school a national institution, and voted a substantial appropriation for its support. But, like many touching and humanitarian expressions, they found but little practical application. The government treasury was unable to meet the demands made upon it, and the institution, even with its national title, was poor. The pupils had nothing, and the director but little more, for his modest fortune had long since vanished, and, as none in France was rich, Charity was but a name, and to obtain one's daily bread an ever recurring and

[1] We find that on 4 Fructidor of the year II. he was appointed as Special Postal Interpreter, by the Committee on Public Safety, and on the 6 Pluviose of the year IV. he entered a claim for the honorarium due him for having examined foreign letters for the purpose of determining whether they contained anything derogatory to the then existing government.

[2] Decrees of July 21 and September 28, 1791.

[3] Law of July 28, 1795.

continually more difficult problem. So one of the pupils of Haüy, Avisse[1] by name, who had previously written *An Ode to My Last Shirt*, wrote a rhymed request to the Minister of the Interior, beginning as follows:

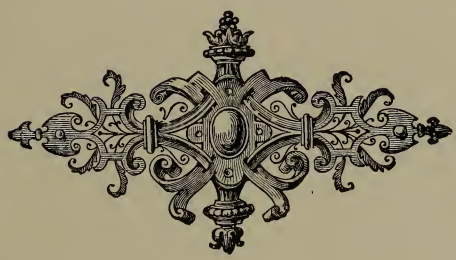
"Sightless I am, yet dare I write to thee
O Bénezach, thou Minister of State,
And wilt thou deign to read the words I write?
Yes, sure thou wilt, for thou art good and great;
Am I to be condemned because I say
That I am hungry, starving day by day?
And wilt thou turn from me when I have said
That I am penniless and have no bread?"

Misfortune could not wholly discourage native French wit and audacity. The verses were cleverly written, and, though not wholly pacific in character, they produced the desired result, and the Minister of the Interior secured for the institution the financial aid so greatly needed.

The spirit of Haüy was in and over all in the establishment. His pupils one day, throwing off the authority of the master, were turbulent in their sudden emancipation, when the gentle guide appeared in their midst with a

[1] See the works of Avisse, a member of the Institution for Blind Workingmen. Published by Desenne, No. 2 Palais du Tribunal, Paris.

copy of *La Fontaine* in his hand, and he read to them a fable applicable to the circumstances. The most rebellious were immediately controlled, and order was restored without an additional word from their beloved master.



CHAPTER IV.

HAÜY THE THEOPHILANTHROPIST.

WITH his sweet and attractive disposition, Haüy made many friends who became actively interested in his work. The grammarian-poet, Fabre d'Olivet, wrote verses on the blind that were full of tenderness, and that made the most attractive feature of the journals devoted to the muses, to the flora, to philanthropy, and other interests of the time.

One of the directors, La Revellière-Lépeaux, was their leading public champion. The desire to compliment so distinguished a patron, and perhaps also drawn by their kindly and honest doctrines, led Valentine Haüy to attach himself to the Theophilanthropists, and thus it happened that the infant school for the blind served as the cradle of a new and important cult.

On Dec. 16, 1796, at the call of La Revellière-Lépeaux, the faithful originators of the

school held a reunion in the principal hall of the National Institute for Blind Workingmen, 34 rue St. Denis, near Lombard Street. This was formerly the Ste. Catherine Home,[1] and still later the Home of the Catharinettes. A long banqueting table had been improvised in the main hall, and upon it were placed bouquets of flowers and sheaves of wheat, symbolizing the creation and growth of the vegetable world.[2]

J. B. Chemin Dupontes, who was the inventor[3] of the cult of which La Revellière was the most celebrated and enthusiastic disciple, gives the aims and dogmas of the new religion :

"Certain fathers of families," he says, "persuaded that religious principles form the basis of all true knowledge, a curb to secret crime, the best consolation in religion, the most efficient encouragement in the perform-

[1] The little home of St. Catherine had served as a night retreat for women. . . . There were sixteen large beds, each of which could accommodate four persons. The rules of the institution permitted the applicants to come for three successive nights, and they were provided with supper. Valentine Haüy was placed in charge of the institution in the beginning of the year III. Fenon, *Memoirs of the Hospitals*, 1788.

[2] Prudhomme, *Impartial History of the Revolution.*

[3] Chemin Dupontes, after the death of Chaumette and Robespierre, philosophically rejecting Christianity, invented a religion which he described in 1796 in a work entitled *Manual of Theophilanthropy.* A full description of the commencement of the religion will be found in *L'Année Religieuse des Theophilanthropes*, by Chemin.

ance of all duties, have united themselves in an organization for the purpose of seeking a plan which will save their children from the dangers of irreligion. They concluded that mysterious cults gave numerous adversaries, and that the large part of both sexes, when launched upon the world are unable to resist the numerous arguments with which they are attacked, and often in renouncing the mysteries they forget at the same time both religion and morality. They thought that the surest method was to inculcate in the minds of their children the principles of natural religion which none may attack except those utterly corrupt."

"We believe in the existence of God, and the immortality of the soul. We worship God, love our neighbors, and serve our country. The Good is that alone which can preserve man and develop him. The Bad, is that alone which can debase and destroy him. Children, honor your fathers and mothers, obey them with affection, and care for them in their old age. Fathers and mothers, instruct your children; wives see in your husbands the head of the household; husbands, love your wives, and strive to make them happy."[1]

Having spoken thus, Chemin intoned the hymn written by Desargues to the Supreme Being (it had already served for the fête of June 8, 1794): "Father of the Universe, Supreme Intelligence, Unknown Benefactor of Blind Mortals." The music, majestic in move-

[1] See *The Fundamental Principles of the Religion of the Theophilanthropists or Adorers of God and Lovers of Men*, containing an exposition of their morals and religious practices, with instruction in the origin and celebration of the cult. A. Rouen, year VI. (1798).

ment, had been composed of course by Gossec, the musician-in-ordinary to the Revolution. This magnificent music, chanted by a large number of singers accompanied by the blind orchestra, produced a grand effect. Several subsequent reunions were held in the hall of the Establishment for Blind Workmen, at which were present Madame Permon, the spirituelle mother of the no less spirituelle Duchesse d'Abrantès. "The institution remained the same, and those who gathered at these meetings were the original Quinze-Vingts."

Soon La Revellière became ambitious for the religion of which he was high priest. He declared that his heart was filled by two friendships, that for Chemin Dupontes and André Thuin, and his spirit was drawn by two fascinating attractions, the menagerie of the *Jardin des Plantes* and Theophilanthropy. He wanted none but the grandest temples, and he granted to the exclusive use of his cult the churches of St. Jacques du Haut Pas, St. Gervais, and St. Thomas d'Aquin, dedicated to Bernardin de Saint-Pierre. St. Sulpice, the Temple of Victory, was the parish of Valentine Haüy, and he officiated in his turn. In the Religion of Nature the fathers of families were the only

priests, and on the 10th Messidor of the year VII. the founder of the *National Institute of Blind Workmen* assumed a liturgical costume. In his vestments, consisting of a tunic of celestial blue, extending from the neck to the feet, bound at the waist with a rose-colored cincture, over which was a white robe open in front,[1] he mounted the pulpit[2] "to defend the Religion of Nature against the imputations which have been made against it."

Theophilanthropy, however, did not escape ridicule. "What they teach would not be bad," it was said, "if the Evangelists had not taught the same thing, and much better, nearly 1700 years ago." General Bonaparte had little sympathy with the new cult which he termed "une religion, en robe de chambre," and the theophilanthropists,—the theophilan-

[1] La Revellière affected striking costumes. He issued an order in the *Moniteur*, Dec. 7, 1790, that the costume of the National Guards should be red, white, and blue, and that prominently on their uniform should appear the words: *Constitution, liberté, égalité;* and underneath, the word *veillez!*

[2] The following note is an invitation sent by Haüy to a friend: "To Citizen Monsaldy, Engraver, No. 2, Rue de Moliere, near the Odeon, Café No. 15. Haüy salutes the Citizen Monsaldy, and presents his respects to Madame. They are invited to be present to-day, at the Temple of Victory (St. Sulpice), at noon, to hear a defence of the Religion of Nature against the imputations that have been made. If they bring with them their friends and ladies it will not be taken amiss. Messidor 10, year VII."—*From Unpublished Letters.*

throphiles, — the "Worshippers of God, and Friends of Men" he irreverently called "Commediens."

It must be allowed that this so-called Religion of Nature had in it much of the theatrical, declamatory, perhaps soporific. It was the natural product of the age. The caustic Talleyrand urged La Revellière to have himself crucified in order to give a dramatic and realistic effect and to be wholly consistent. The director, however, had little intention of making a martyr of himself. He preferred to interpret his rôle of apostle from another point of view; while Chemin Dupontes was making a compilation from Confucius, Zoroaster, Socrates, Aristotle, Seneca, La Bruyère, Fénelon, Voltaire, Rousseau, and the rest, that should be the *Book of the Hours of the Theophilanthropists*, the fantastic dreamer La Revellière was planning from his active imagination a ritual, with such sentimental precepts and symbolisms as to the more practical mind of to-day approaches the ludicrous.

In their marriage ceremony the espoused appeared before the altar; they were interlaced with ribbons or flowers, of which the extreme ends on either side of the pair were borne by the oldest members of the respective

families. The head of the family plighted the betrothed couple, and the fathers looked on, filled with the happy anticipation of living their lives over again in their posterity, and interesting themselves in the well-being of future generations. He urged them to fulfil a sacred duty in planting trees and in grafting fruitful branches in the forest, that they might some time appease the hunger of the weary traveller.

This touching admonition inspired the creation of an engraving by Monsaldy which greatly pleased and interested Haüy. He writes:

"Theophile Evergète, having passed his life in doing good, and who wished to be useful even after death, devised an ingenious method of conducting a stream far from its source, through the most arid part of the country as marked out by the victories of the consul Bonaparte, and there he raised a fountain which he surrounded with fruitful trees that the traveller coming to quench his thirst might find rest, and shade, and food near the tomb of the philosopher."[1]

The engraving, we read, played an important rôle in Haüy's domestic cult. "I am moved to inform Citizen Monsaldy," he writes, "that on Decadi last, his picture formed a feature in our exercise of the Religion of Nature. I had placed it before an altar

[1] Unpublished letter.

covered with flowers. I then read the inscription to my children and it served as a text for a little improvised discourse on benevolence, and the reasons for our celebration of the festival. The sight of that perpetual act of goodness brought tears to our eyes."[1]

Flowers, always flowers! On the 10th Floreal of the year VI. the Theophilanthropists were invited "to bring flowers to place upon the urn containing the remains of the little daughter of Citizen Haüy who died at the age of four years, and to pray that the Creator would receive her to Himself."

They gathered in the temple, where the following ceremonial was observed: On a tablet was this inscription: "Death is the beginning of Immortality."[2] Before the altar was an urn buried in flowers. The head of the family said: "Death has come to one of us," He added, if the deceased had arrived at an age of reason: "Let us remember the virtues and forget the faults; let this event be a warning to us to be ever ready to appear before the Supreme Judge of our Actions."

[1] Letter dated Prairial 13, year VII.

[2] See *The Peace and Unity of the French*, cited by Abbé Gregory in his *History of Religious Sects.*

He would then make sundry reflections on the brevity of life, and immortality of the soul, etc.[1]

Theophilanthropy and the theophilanthropists, however, became more and more subjects of ridicule to the more intelligent. They were abandoned by the populace who flocked to the churches again made catholic, and were held in small regard, as was generally known, by the First Consul. The people loved neither the phrases nor the phrase makers. So on October 4, 1801, the churches were definitely withdrawn from their use. Valentine Haüy had so seriously compromised himself that Napoleon was no longer willing to trust the future of the *Institution for Blind Workmen* in the hands of a theophilanthropist. So in an official communication from Chaptol[2] on

[1] This rite recalls that of Chaumette which was adopted by the Commune in 1793 (Order of the Commune, Nov. 21, 1793, see *Le Moniteur* of Nov. 23, 1793). The *Section de l'Homme Armé* having protested against the scandalous abandon with which the dead were interred, the Commune decreed that they should be exhumed, wrapped in the tri-color flag, and that before the bier should be carried a banner on which should be the words:

"The just man never dies; he lives in the memories of the Citizens."

[2] In the report made by Chaptol to the First Consul, we find that it was not the intention of the government to abolish the school which Haüy had founded, but it was considered that it would be to the advantage of both institutions to have them combined. M. de la Sizeranne hopes in a future publication to give Chaptol's report.

January 4, 1801, it was reunited with the Quinze-Vingts.[1] This practically meant to abolish the school; for to unite it with an asylum was to defeat the very end for which it had been designed, certainly for a large number of the blind.

Haüy was retired with a pension of 2,000 francs.

A man fallen into the sea and bravely struggling with one arm through the tempestuous waves, while with the other he holds aloft the manuscript written almost with his heart's blood, and who, just as he touches land, sees his treasure float beyond his reach, may indicate in some degree the position in which Valentine Haüy found himself in 1801. By almost superhuman efforts, suffering numberless privations, he had succeeded throughout the Revolution in saving from destruction the work to which he had devoted his life's best energies; and just as social order was again restored, he saw it utterly annihilated.

His pupils, lovingly taught that they might become thoughtful and earnest, self-respecting and self-supporting men, he was obliged to see retired to the Quinze-Vingts, where they

[1] The decree was signed by Chaptol, Minister of the Interior, on the 28th Pluvial, year X.

would lead idle, aimless lives, or condemned to occupy themselves from morning to evening in the simplest mechanical duties, and himself still young, only fifty-six years, placed in retirement!

Shut out from all participation in public beneficent work, Valentine Haüy was yet not discouraged. He believed; and they that have faith can never be defeated.

CHAPTER V.

THE HOUSE IN RUE ST. AVOYE. THE JOURNEY TO RUSSIA.

In February, 1802, on the rue St. Avoye, downcast but not disheartened, Haüy opened the Musée des Aveugles. This institution was educational in character, and was designed more especially for those of the blind who were self-sustaining, whether French or foreign-born.[1] The school included in its numbers many excellent pupils, but the business department was unfortunately not successfully managed. Many strangers of note

[1] In a prospectus issued by Haüy and entitled *Humanity, the Establishment of a New Institution for Blind Workmen*, we find that "this institution will be arranged in two departments. The first for blind children under seven years of age, who shall be cared for at the home of Mme. Haüy, situated at Chatou, near Nanterre, about ten miles from Paris. The second department, designed for such adult blind as may not be eligible for admission to the National Institute, and who shall be instructed in a house secured for the purpose near the centre of Paris, and admitted under similar conditions to those governing the children's department."

passing through Paris visited the little house in the rue St. Avoye. The Emperor of Russia, and later the Dowager Empress, having learned through their special correspondents of this valuable work, conceived the fancy of having the founder of the school visit St. Petersburg for the purpose of establishing in the Russian capital a like institution. Valentine Haüy accepted the invitation, and extended negotiations were immediately entered upon. "You know, sir," said he to the intermediary sent by the Emperor, "that I have no fortune. The temple that I have had the glad satisfaction of raising for humanity has absorbed all my energies." He undertook himself, however, aided no doubt by a practical friend, to formulate an estimate of probable expenses,[1] but the royal generosity checking further calculations, he closed by saying that he would "rest in the well-known justice and generosity of His Imperial Majesty the Czar, to make suitable recompense to a man who should bring into his State a discovery dear, no doubt, to the heart of the Sovereign,

[1] He demanded an annual pension of at least 4000 roubles, and during his stay in St. Petersburg a furnished house with light and fuel, with 2000 roubles additional to defray the expenses of his journey. Report cited by Dr. Skrébitzki in his brochure, *Valentine Haüy at St. Petersburgh.*

and the object of which was always the advancement of science and the uplifting of humanity,"—a simple confidence, a touching *abandon*, but a degree of imprudence even in a transaction with the Emperor of all the Russias, and this he was made to see. Finally in 1806, after four years of ineffectual parleying, he started for St. Petersburg,[1] accompanied by his wife and son, together with Fournier, his favorite blind pupil. He was to be absent but one year.

On his journey Haüy made many stoppages. Princes, moved by philanthropical impulses, were anxious to see the man who had done so much for blind humanity. The King of Prussia in an autograph letter invited him to Charlottenburg. He was fêted on all sides. The Academy of Sciences at Berlin extended to him an invitation to participate in their deliberations, and, as a practical result, a charitably minded citizen founded a school for the blind after his counsels. From Berlin they proceeded to Mittau. Haüy was warmly

[1] Haüy was assisted for a portion of the time at least in his work as Director of the Musée des Aveugles by a man named Heilmann. We know of the latter only through the prospectus in French and German, of which the text was preserved in Canavelet's catalogue. We learn from this that it was Heilmann's intention to publish a special review in German.

received by the Count of the Province, Sept. 7, 1806, whom he had hoped to meet at Versailles under different circumstances twenty years before. On that famous table of white wood on which had been written, they say, the charter of 1814, the table which afterward had the honor to be taken to the Tuileries and placed in the study of Louis XVIII., Fournier wrote in pencil the following clever and prophetic words: "*It will be in the reign of Louis XVIII. that the Institution for the Blind will reach perfection.*" The Count responded that he had followed, with great interest, through the journals, the labors of Haüy, and, in the event of certain circumstances which might occur, he would not forget his work.[1]

Their arrival at St. Petersburg occurred under the most brilliant auspices.[2] They had been looked for with growing interest for some time. All fashionable Russia was on the *qui vive* to see Haüy and his remarkable pupil. It was supposed that a great event was about to

[1] From a letter to the Duke of Richelieu, written from Russia. Unpublished papers of Valentine Haüy.

[2] From Dr. Skrébitzki, who has studied with great care the details of Haüy's sojourn in Russia, that they reached St. Petersburg on Sept. 9, 1806. It is quite possible that Valentine Haüy made a slight error in saying to the Duke of Richelieu that it was on the 7th of September that he had visited Louis XVIII. at Mittau, as that town was 600 kilometres distant from the Russian capital.

be inaugurated in the interest of the blind. It was, however, but a passing fancy. Almost as quickly Haüy was completely forgotten and left obscurely in his little hotel.[1] The building which had been promised to him was not forthcoming, and he was not able to obtain pupils. To his official inquiries he received only the imperturbable answer: "There are no blind in Russia."

The weariness, the discouragements, the trials that Haüy underwent at that time would fill a volume. He met all classes of people. Even the creditors of the Blind Musée, who were certainly not actuated by philanthropical motives, followed him to St. Petersburg and levied upon his income, and then, thanks to Russian bureaucracy, this embargo was maintained for six years, notwithstanding the fact that at the end of two he had made full legal settlement. When pupils and a place to instruct them had at length been secured, then began a series of jealousies and denunciations.

A certain Bouchoueff, who was destined to be Haüy's successor, a man who seems to have been both vain and indolent, occasioned him great annoyance, and necessitated on his part much letter writing. In his correspondence recovered by Dr. Skrébitzki, we read: "In order

[1] Hôtel du Nord, 4 rue des Officiess.

that Monsieur Bouchoueff may fit himself to be my successor, he must know the price that I was obliged to pay for success in France, and the conditions that have made it possible for me to succeed here."

"Born with a love of work, I have devoted my entire days to my labors, from five or six in the morning to ten or eleven at night. Having domestic tastes, I have preferred the attractions of my home and of my work, to outside pleasures, which nevertheless I do not condemn in others. He must understand that the Director of an Institution for the Blind must not be only a great worker, he must be endowed with energies of both a physical and a moral character."

Haüy was not aroused, however, to offensive action.[1] An audience with the Czar, sought for shortly after his arrival in Russia, was delayed almost beyond endurance, and he was by no means sure that it ever would be obtained. His sojourn extended through eleven years, and his grief seems to have been allayed by its excess, for we find on a page of his Memoirs the following words.

"It is when I sacrifice hours of sleep to another subject of wider utility" (he alluded to a system of telegraphy of his invention) "that I am filled with mortification and

[1] This is what he wrote just prior to his departure for Paris, April, 3, 1806: "Little informed as you may be of the contentions on every side, I will say less of the struggles with myself. You must have seen that I have constantly opposed to every attack a shield covered with velvet, choosing blunted arrows when I have been obliged to defend myself, and I have taken care to strike wide of the source from which the blows were directed against me."

humiliation. Oh! good Alexander! and you his worthy Ministers of State. Oh! mighty Russian nation. Little you know of the pride of a young man, who glories in the possession of talents which he has done nothing to acquire, and who has become, through the unjust reception accorded to him in your hospitable land, an old man, who has been granted a position among the servants of humanity, and who came only that he might give comfort, and in direct response to the call of the Sovereign." [1]

While the force of Russian inertia wearied even Haüy, the prediction of Fournier was realized. The Count of Provence, having become Louis XVIII., had reorganized the "Royal Institution for the Youthful Blind." [2]

[1] Quoted by Skrébitzki.

[2] Decree of February 8, 1815. At the same time the then Minister of the Interior declined to recall Haüy from Russia to restore him to his position as head of the Institution. In his place was appointed a celebrated physician, one Dr. Guillé.

CHAPTER VI.

HAÜY'S LAST YEARS.

OLD and infirm, Haüy wished to end his days in France. He left St. Petersburg, therefore, in 1817, bearing as a compensation the decoration of St. Vladimar (4th Class). He returned to the King's Garden (*Jardin des Plantes*), to the modest home of his brother the Abbé, ever the student mineralogist, ever the saintly priest who since 1784 had made no change in his mode of life, not even the hours of his simple daily meals. An existence so calm throughout the turbulent period of the Revolution presents a most curious phenomenon.[1]

[1] After the 10th of August, not being *au courant*, owing to his solitary life, much of his time being spent alone, he was surprised by a number of rough men violently forcing their way into his modest lodgings. They began by demanding if he was armed. "Not otherwise than thus," was his answer, at the same time drawing a spark from his electric machine, by this act entirely disarming his dangerous visitors. They were pacified, however, for a moment only. They

The old seminary of St. Firmin, 68 rue St. Victoire, had become changed into the Royal Institute for Blind Youths. It was near the *Jardin des Plantes*, but the director, more anxious to be himself considered a man of importance than to honor the actual founder of the institution, closed the doors upon Haüy "in that he had aided in the Revolution." "In regard to myself," writes Haüy to Fournier, Feb. 28, 1818, "I smile to be so looked upon, and I can see that if any friend were

immediately seized his papers, which were covered merely by algebraic formulæ. These, which were the only things of value that he possessed, were tumbled together in a confused heap. He was then confined with the priests and clerical teachers of the opposition party in the Seminary of St. Firmin, which had been converted into a prison, and was placed next to the Cardinal Lemoine. It was an exchange, however, of but one cell for another, and it made but little difference. Happy in finding himself in the midst of his friends, he waited only to bring his desk, and to put on the crucifix of his order.

His friend and pupil Geoffrey succeeded in obtaining an order setting him at liberty. He was so well satisfied in his confinement, however, that he had no wish to leave the prison, and the following morning he was actually turned out. The next day began the massacres of September 2d. Through the entire Revolution he was not again molested. He appeared once only in the ranks of his battalion, but was immediately ordered away because of his ill-favored aspect. He had both the ability and courage to write with impunity a defence of Lavoisier, Member of the Commission of Weights and Measures of which Borde was President and the Abbé Haüy Secretary, 28 Frimaire, year II. (Eulogy of the Abbé Haüy, by Cuvier, previously cited.) It is a curious coincidence that it was the Seminary of St. Firmin that in 1815 became the "*Institution for Blind Youths.*"

good enough to write my epitaph before my death, the words which ended the life of St. Athanasius, who, like myself, was forced to flee to a foreign land, might be graven also on my tomb." He demonstrated during the remainder of his life that the wicked never forgive their victims for not having fallen at the first blow.

Happily the blind of the Quinze-Vingts were independent,—a certain number of them had been pupils of Haüy in 1801,—these welcomed the return of their master with open arms, and often came as visitors at the Royal Gardens. They often received, too, at the Quinze-Vingts, their old benefactor.

But nothing can endure forever, not even injustice. In March, 1821, a man with heart and conscience was put in charge of the institute. Dr. Pignier—more royalistic and more Catholic than his predecessor—did not ask whether the Father of the Blind had been right or wrong in his course during the Revolution. He thought, doubtless, that when the ship was foundering one can see but imperfectly the color of the life-boat sent out to save.

The congregated blind were now under definite protection. They were occupying a

new home. It would be necessary the father should sit by the family hearth, at least for one day that the new house should become as the old one, the paternal homestead. Haüy repaired to the rue St. Victoire, where a feast had been prepared, the entire institution taking part. The orchestra and the chorus executed the cantata composed by Huart and Gossec for the first St. Valentine celebration in the school on Feb. 13, 1788.

"Friend, whom we shall always venerate,
Whose life and talents have been devoted to us,
Who has corrected in us the faults given by Nature,
From whose genius we have gotten light,
O generous Mortal who gives back life to us,
We celebrate thy zeal and thy benevolence,
Thou hast made Nature to bow down before thee,
And render to thee her most precious secrets." [1]

The good old man, choked with emotion, could say only these simple and touching words: "My dear children, it is God who has done it all." On returning to his home that evening, we may be sure that Haüy found his little chamber brighter and more beautiful than ever before, because the rays that had brightened his life had their focus in his heart.

The vital forces of the old man, however,

[1] Chorus sung at the *fête* of Haüy.

began rapidly to decline. He writes in November:[1]

"Oh! you who are of the number of my comforters! receive anew this title, for I have more need than ever before of your sympathy. I am sadly paralyzed. Cords are drawn the entire length of my little hermit cell, which serve both to save me from falling and to assist me to rise. However, thank God, my window is open now in my closing days, and I am permitted to lodge with my good brother, the Abbé Haüy, comforted by the tender ministrations of my loving daughter, and in the near vicinity of the Royal Institute for the Youthful Blind,—as I had expressed a desire and a hope in the early days of May, 1817, to the Count de Noailles, our ambassador to St. Petersburg. My physical faculties are so nearly paralyzed that even at dinner with my daughter and my friends, I can hardly hear them speak."

"In the evening, in the company of my brother, who comes faithfully to me, when I succeed in catching a few words, I cannot understand them. I can decipher my own writing with the greatest difficulty, although it is easy enough to read. My tongue is so stiff that I can no longer speak plainly. Ah! if I could but walk, or be dragged even, how joyfully would I go three or four hours each day to the printing department of St. Firmin, there to correct the efforts of those poor unfortunate but interesting children,—and neither honor nor fortune would I ask in return."[2]

[1] Tuesday, Nov. 4, 1821, Feast of St. Barbara, Home of the Abbé Haüy, Member of the Academy of Sciences to Monsieur Dejean, Inspector of the work of the pupils of the Royal Blind Institute, No. 68 St. Firmin, rue St. Victoire.

[2] On Dec. 10th he writes: "One of my dear comforters! I say one, for among those who see are several, chiefest of whom are Pig-

He expired peacefully in the arms of his brother March 19, 1822. Dying, not as a theophilanthropist, — all that was forgotten long ago,—but simply as a Christian, receiving in his extremity the ministrations of the Curé of St. Midard, his own parish priest.

This is in merest sketch the life of Valentine Haüy. Once, some one in speaking of his work, compared it to that of the Abbé de l'Épée. "Ah, no," he exclaimed, "the Abbé de l'Épée is a creator of souls, and I—I am but the inventor of spectacles." [1] This was indeed charming, but it was altogether too modest. Valentine Haüy was more, much more than an inventor, he was an apostle. His actual invention was indeed that of typography in relief. This he had dreamed of, and ultimately practically applied. He believed in

nier, Margolin, Guenard, and more than all others all the young girls, for they at least do not arouse jealousy." "My dear seeing Comforter, you will pardon the scrap of paper on which I invited you yesterday to come to see me. Though I do see, being paralyzed, I cannot show with the finger end the blank paper to Consoler Guenard, because he cannot see at all. Come, then, and I will show you that I work for the advancement of your Royal Institute day and night. I wish that Guenard might talk over with you the new edition that has appeared of the pictures of Paris. Adieu. I embrace you. Your poor old paralytic, V. Haüy."

[1] A remark frequently made by Haüy : "Les yeux sont des lunettes taillées de la main du Dieu."—*Logique de Port Royal.*

the possibility of making active and useful the lives of the best of the blind. His idea may not have been absolutely original, but what matter? His faith was great, and this sufficed to proclaim him one of the great men of his time.

Does this seem paradoxical? I believe that that which contributes to the grandeur of the man is his absolute force of conviction, and the faculty of extraordinary spiritual penetration. And then, it is rare that anything new, anything great, profoundly moves this world without the intervention of a man of unusual strength and courage.

That exclusive credit cannot be given to the man whose name has been connected with this work I am fully aware. The influence of the time at which he was born, and the way he had lived, may not be underestimated. A judicious critic will recognize the elements of his great discovery in the mental attitude of his contemporaries and in the spirit of the times. Newton was the resultant of Kepler, Gassendi, Leibnitz, D'Olier, and of that galaxy of grand men at the beginning of the Fronde. It is none the less evident that the need of the time was a wider intelligence that would include in its grasp that of all

contemporaries, that should synthesize where they could but analyze, and above all a mind of such temper as to make possible the admission of a new conception.

Mankind rarely, as a whole, adopt a new view of things. It has always been necessary that the higher intellects and apostles are needed for each upward step in the progress of humanity, and the histories of the great discoveries and advances in the world will be read in the lives of its great men.[1]

[1] De Bernieres de Bagnols, Lenain, Mother Angelique, Liencourt de Sévigné, and others. See *Port Royal*, by Sainte-Beuve, the chapter entitled "The Charity of Port Royal" and certain pages of Alphonse Feuillet, who undertakes to prove that it was not St. Vincent de Paul who initiated the organized public assistance at the commencement of the miseries of the Fronde.

PART III.

THE SCHOOLS FOR THE BLIND.

CHAPTER I.

INDIVIDUALITY.

When a visitor enters for the first time a school for the blind, it is with mingled feelings of curiosity and apprehension. He expects to find the place oppressive, obscurely lighted, and silent. He looks for something mysterious—perhaps lugubrious. "A school for the blind must be dark," he argues; "the pupils have no need of light. Their days must be days of endurance merely, so that they get the air. Why have great, clear windows, when the sun's rays that stream through them strike sightless eyes? It must be dreary and sad—how can they laugh, or even smile—who

live out their days in the company of these children of misfortune?"

On crossing the sill, one is tempted to lower the voice as on entering a room in which the dead are laid, or where funeral obsequies are about to be performed. One looks only in the halls to meet the dreary beings, gliding slowly and silently along the walls, cautiously feeling their way with outstretched fingers.

But what one actually finds is a scene far different. When we discover the school for the blind brightly lighted and filled with animation and gaiety, sometimes even bubbling over with joyousness, the description that follows will be understood. But here is in typical detail the idea that the public has of a school for the blind, when they have any idea of it at all.

It is imagined that because of the extraordinarily minute care that the blind are supposed to require every minute of the day, when they get up and when they go to bed, when they eat and when they walk, that the rates charged for care and instruction must be enormously high. I have been asked more than once, in a mysterious way, and with due caution, when I was still a pupil, what it must have cost to be an inmate at the Institute at

Paris! supposing that I would name a sum so large as to leave far in arrear the accounts with which parents of our collegians are overwhelmed.

So when I say that the annual fee at the National Institute for Blind Youths was 1200 francs, including everything, absolutely everything, clothes, washing, mending, for pupils of every grade, with hospital care when sick, and even burial in case of death, it seemed to them absurd.

I might add that the cotton of our shirts and the cloth of our uniforms had in them nothing effeminate, and our clothing, generally very appropriate, was always exceedingly simple; that our menus, and this touches the school-boy, always put on an elegant card by our manager, were models of their kind, not indeed resembling in any degree those of De Bignon, but nourishing, and always healthful, at least they always insisted that they were with a singular persistence. They were indeed not always abundant, a fact which we might demonstrate for ourselves. All of this, however, succeeds but imperfectly in explaining the actual state of affairs and my conclusion always is: I see that you do not get an exact idea of a school for the blind, and that

it may be more clear to you, than I can make it, I would say, "go and visit one." Go, if you please, to the Institution of which I speak, not to make me a call of ten minutes in the parlor, that would doubtless bore you. Come on Wednesday, at half past one, or at four o'clock, and ask for the Director or his Secretary, and he will willingly give you a red card bearing your name. Armed with this talisman you may pass two hours in the Institution, and an agreeable guide will do the honors. You will see then that unusual care is not essential for special teaching. You will see that we move everywhere around the school with ease and rapidity, that it is not always necessary to have some one behind us to guide us; that attendants are busily occupied in checking the chattering, or the fighting, for blind pupils prattle and quarrel just as other children do, and our impulse may be rather to flee from them than to be drawn to them. What I have said before, I repeat now, and I urge those who have had the patience to read what I have written to make still another effort to visit a school for the blind. So much the better if it is the one on the Boulevard des Invalides because that is neither the most complete nor the most perfectly organized.

These institutions, it will be discovered, are for the most part trade schools; that is to say, that with physical, moral, and intellectual training the pupils are also rendered capable of earning their living, and are given a good, working business education. It follows, therefore, that in every well-ordered school for the blind, there are four kinds of instruction in the plan of education; the physical, the moral, the intellectual, and the industrial.

CHAPTER II.

EDUCATION—PHYSICAL AND MORAL.

MORE, even, than other children, the blind while being educated require fresh air, sunlight, and exercise.[1] Too frequently the normal development of the poor little body has been prevented, either as a cause or result of illness; or still more frequently by the exaggerated solicitude of parents, less judicious than affectionate, and not rarely by the involuntary neglect of the family absorbed by the daily duties. In brief, it is essential that the blind child be sent to a school in which lost time may be regained, and in which he may at once develop his intelligence and increase his physical faculties. His chest must be enlarged, vigor and suppleness must be given to each of his frail members weakened by inaction, and

[1] It is hardly necessary to say that intellectual, physical, moral, and industrial instruction is as necessary for girls as for boys. The methods differ slightly, but the essential processes are the same.

which have increased only in length, like a plant grown in the dark.

Even more than in the schools for children who see, it is imperative that those for the blind be so situated that they may be absolutely inundated with sunshine and fresh air. There should be great courts, and gardens, with covered playgrounds for their recreations. The windows must be many and large, through which torrents of oxygen may pour every minute in the day, in the class and recitation rooms, as well as in the dormitories, and more especially where the pupils live. In this particular a superabundance is a necessity, a mere sufficiency is misery.

The gymnastics are taught in much the same way as to those who see. It is of course evident that the blind will not undertake the feats of skilled gymnasts, nor try to execute performances on the flying trapeze. The movements are those simply having a hygienic bearing, including systematic movements of the arms, the legs, and the body. The weights and pulleys, the parallel bars, the horizontal ladders from which one may hang by the arms, the back ladders, excellent for raising the chest and strengthening the back, are all important. As the blind cannot follow the

movements of a leader, each will require individual instruction, and in order that they may progress as rapidly as those who see, the instructor must not have a large number of pupils in each class. The surveillance must be exceedingly careful, as it is quite possible that the exercises may not be wholly devoid of danger.

Of the moral teaching in a school for the blind, less need be said than of the physical, because it is evident that it must be equally serious, equally profound, indeed equally religious in a special school for the blind as in any other, and the instruction is given in the same way to those who do not, as to those who do see. There is not much variety in moral ethics, and there are not many ways of making them loved and practised. It is necessary that there be true, noble teachers, and, thank God, up to this time, they have not been wanting.

I hasten to reach the intellectual, professional, and industrial training which the blind receive, of which I may be permitted to report more at length.

CHAPTER III.

INTELLECTUAL INSTRUCTION.

In 1826 a visitor at the Royal Institution for Blind Youths, then installed in the old black building formerly occupied as the Seminary St. Firmin, 68 rue St. Victor, might have distinguished among the crowd of pupils pressing through the narrow doorway a young man about seventeen years of age, whose intelligent and sympathetic face gave early evidence of thoughtful pre-occupation. This blind boy was Louis Braille, and the problem that perplexed his singularly ingenious and penetrating, intellect, was the elaboration of a system of reading and writing, designed to give to the blind valuable assistance in their intellectual and professional studies. Even before Haüy, the blind who had read or attempted to read, had done so quite naturally with the fingers. It is the index finger of the right hand that is generally employed for this pur-

pose. Often they add to this the index finger of the left hand, which directs the reading, and before the end of the line serves to indicate the beginning of the line following, to avoid the interruption that would follow in the movement of the reader's finger from one line to the other.

Haüy, it will be remembered, had conceived the idea of producing in relief on strong paper Roman characters large enough to be recognized by the touch. Before his time the form and dimensions of the characters had been varied, but they had always preserved the ordinary letter type. This the blind could read, but in writing they could form only the alphabet employed by those who see, and that with difficulty and hesitation, so that in teaching them writing they continued to employ movable characters, and the art had necessarily remained in a very rudimentary condition. This state of affairs continued until, in 1819, Charles Barbier, an officer of artillery, and a very ingenious fellow, conceived the happy idea of combining points in a certain manner; making certain combinations of points, produced on tough paper with a blunt-pointed instrument, in such a way as to form thirty-six signs representing the prin-

cipal sounds in the French alphabet. Barbier called his system "Écriture Nocturne," and he dedicated it to the blind and to such others as had reached maturity without learning to write.

It was a system of tactile reading, having a certain value, but incapable of satisfying all the needs of the literary blind, such as was Braille and others of his fellow-students. In this "Night reading," so-called, there was a valuable thought, which Braille quickly grasped. It was to take the point and not the line as the basis of tangible characters. The line is most appropriate for the eye, but not at all for the finger, which is easily embarrassed by lines when the letters in relief are small.

The point, on the other hand, is always clearly tangible even when small and approximated to other points. But the true and best method of employing these points, of arranging them in such number and varied combinations as to furnish signs for all the exigencies of French orthography, still remained for him to find. The number, however, must be limited, because the signs must not be too numerous. Braille took as a basis six points arranged in two vertical lines as follows: ⠇⠇[1]

[1] In several of the institutions in this country a modification of the Braille, called the New York Point Print, is employed. It is based

These points can be formed into sixty-three combinations, by the aid of which can be represented all the alphabetical signs, letters, accents, and marks of punctuation; all the numerals, all algebraic symbols, musical characters, and stenographic signs. In a word, the Braille system answers equally well for the reading or writing of words, music, figures, or stenography.

The way having been opened, the young inventor designed an apparatus, an absolute masterpiece of practical simplicity, by the aid of which the blind could form signs composed of points with as much facility and certainty as those who form written characters on lines.

This apparatus consisted of a writing-table, composed of a metallic plate, about eight inches long, and two millimetres thick, crossed by grooves, vertical and horizontal, at intervals of .002. This plate is attached by hinges to a wooden back. These are mounted in a frame, the holes pierced in the plate corresponding to the grooves in the wood below. In these holes, the dowels serving as a guide, punctures are made with a metal stylus in the two horizontal rows of rectangles placed verti-

upon four points arranged in the form of a square thus ⁝⁝. The superiority of either system over the other is still a subject of active controversy among American educators of the blind.

cally. Each rectangle in the height enclosed between three grooves should be .0075 in size, and it should contain two points side by side, so as to form six points in the rectangle. ⠉

A space follows each row of rectangles for the purpose of separating the rows of lines of signs.

A sheet of strong paper, such as designing paper, is placed on the grooved plate, the frame and the plate holding it in position. This table, with the stylus, are so perfectly adapted to the needs of the blind that they are employed with a rapidity and a certainty not to be obtained by any other system. And, moreover, the punctured points are as easily read as if printed.

I fear I have been prolix in speaking of Braille and his invention, but I will be pardoned in view of the immense importance of this system, and the rôle it plays in the instruction and in the life of the blind.

A curious fact may be noted, and it is that blind children learn to read, and especially to write, in less time and with less effort than those who see, owing to the logical simplicity of the Braille system.

After a preliminary course the blind pupil

studies grammar, and literature, history and other advanced subjects. He is constantly armed with his stylus and employs it in his work and in his play just as the seeing student employs his pen.

Instruction in geography and mathematics, in order that it may be complete, requires certain special apparatus that is exceedingly interesting. For mathematical work are numerous appliances independent of the Braille table, by which the work is greatly facilitated, but which need not be described here.

The blind have constant practice in mental calculation, and those who are much employed in figures frequently acquire a readiness and an accuracy that is remarkable.

For instruction in geometry a collection of figures in relief are employed, formed either of running lines or rows of points. The letters necessary for demonstration are placed where they should be, as for those who see; the characters used however, being those of Braille.

Each pupil has a book of figures corresponding by number with those in his geometry, and in class he always follows with his finger that which the instructor has demonstrated or is demonstrating. In this way the teaching is

easy, clear, and rapid. The collection consists of solids in wood, divisibles, a complete assortment of metric measures, none of these especially arranged for the blind, such only as may be easily obtained from any educational publisher. In the demonstration, however, the professor is not satisfied merely to exhibit the objects to the pupil, he is required to examine it carefully and then to give an accurate description of the form and peculiarities of each article.

Geography is taught by the aid of relief charts, which the pupils trace with the finger while the teacher is describing the country to be studied.

Terrestrial globes are made in relief, so that the blind are made to readily comprehend the relative position of the different parts of the universe. Charts are pressed in strong paper so as to be readily tangible to the fingers.

The contour of the earth, and coast borders are indicated by salient running lines, the water courses, the direction of railroad lines, by either running lines or a succession of points. The initial letter of the principal cities, capitals, and chief places, are marked in Braille. With the assistance of charts of this character the pupils easily acquire a very exact

knowledge of geography. Reading aloud, if employed by the blind, forms an important element in their instruction. There is no more rapid method of making them familiar with the best literature of all times, and of the chief events in history. Stories of travel form a part of every programme of readings, and always prove an added attraction.

The blind child who has never seen a house, an ox, a pumpkin, or a boat, would have merely the vaguest idea of these things if the teacher were to confine himself to simply describing them to him. Monuments, animals, or plants, must be touched by the hands, so that their peculiarities may be appreciated and recognized.

Undoubtedly it is difficult to introduce the Column Vendôme or even an elephant from the Jardin des Plantes in the class. But there are admirably executed models in cardboard that represent these things, and these serve excellently for instruction. When the grains, or fruits, or animals can be presented *au naturel*, living, dry, or stuffed, nothing can be better, for these are as realistic as possible.

I have spoken of the Column Vendôme. A blind organist wished to get a knowledge of the statue surmounting it, but how would

he reach it, and then how touch it with his fingers? The Commune came, and when the man of bronze fell with the monument in the *débris* of the Place Vendôme, our blind friend said to himself: "Now I have found a unique opportunity to 'see' and touch the Napoleon, so well known to every Parisian." He hurried then to the Place, overcoming a hundred obstacles, found means to break the cordon of guards, and drew near to prostrate greatness. During this time a National guardsman, who by accident saw what the organist was endeavoring to accomplish, felt it his duty to give him a lecture on contemporaneous history. "Consider," he said, "the tyrant who ——etc., etc." But the blind man heard nothing; he continued to touch every portion of the figure. Then he was satisfied. He had "seen" the statue of the Emperor.

Following the early studies, the lessons grow little by little into a course of natural history, instruction that must be followed with much greater detail with the blind than with those who see, for, as colored plates offer no help, it becomes absolutely necessary to put in the hands of the pupils plastic models of the principal representatives of the three natural kingdoms.

It is necessary, too, that the educated blind —those who are to be occupied with professional work—should be enabled to correspond with those who see and with whom they will have business relations, without the intervention of an assistant. So there has been placed within their reach divers means of forming the ordinary written characters. Certain of these are purely mechanical, and require no special skill. With others again, facility is obtained only after more or less practice. For the former are somewhat complicated appliances, and the writing is in pencil; other more simple forms are produced by the simple rounded point.

We have, moreover, various hand-guides which are especially useful for blind adults who wish to continue to write with a pen or pencil, as, for instance, the arrangement of Braille-Foucoult, which enables the least skilled of the blind to make all the ordinary characters by a succession of little colored points. There is also a stylograph, designed by Count de Beaufort, by means of which the blind may re-read what they have written, and even what one with sight has written, by aid of that invention.

Strong paper is put over a sheet of card-

board, which is covered with cloth and which is deeply ruled in a number of lines. A stylet, pointed with wood, bone, or metal, is used as a pencil by the right hand, and guided by the index finger of the left.

The writing proceeds from right to left, so that in turning the paper the characters may be read from left to right in the usual manner. When one who sees writes to one who is blind, the paper need not be reversed. The blind, knowing how to trace the reversed letters, know also how to read them.

CHAPTER IV.

PROFESSIONAL TEACHING—MUSIC.

It is beautiful, no doubt, to be well informed in orthography, arithmetic, geometry, and the rest. The formation of the participle, the extraction of cube root, the theory of the square of the hypothenuse, have a charm for the intellectual mind, and, it is said, have even a moral value. Unfortunately, however, the progress realized up to this year of grace 1888 have not made this kind of knowledge as useful to the stomach as to the intellect. The social betterment of the blind without fortune cannot then be achieved, except under the condition of his receiving a complete professional or industrial education. Shall he be a workman, or shall he be a musician? This is the first question always asked when a blind child enters the school. It is a question of primary importance. The best blind work-

man, unless he shall add some little business to his industry, can never succeed by his own unaided efforts in earning his dry bread. A musician, on the other hand, under favorable circumstances and having ordinary talent, will have mediocre success. The novitiate is therefore submitted to a most crucial examination. The conformation of his hands is examined, and he is required to sing such songs as he may know, the better to see what may be his sentiment, his intonation, and his rhythm. Finally, by critical inquiry, his nature, character, and attributes are carefully ascertained.

If the master to whom this investigation is entrusted adjudge the pupil qualified, he is at once put in the classes for the study of sol fa, and the piano, where each day his musical faculties are cultivated with the greatest care. Although the various musical professions offer such superior advantages to the blind, the effort is never made to urge music as a vocation in the face of natural disqualifications; and in well-organized schools frequent examinations very quickly determine which of the pupils are unfitted for the art, and their time is then wholly devoted to acquiring some mechanical trade.

In order to produce the best results the musical instruction of the blind must be conducted in a most serious manner.

It is not the aim to make mere music-boxes of those children who will execute an air at command, which has been acquired only after a long and exacting tutelage. No, a result sufficient to delight the merely curious who visit the school, is of little practical use for the future. The intent is to make in the fullest sense *musicians*, skilled equally in the theory and in the practice of their art. It is for this reason, therefore, that it does not suffice that the child shall have facility in finger movements for the piano, the organ, the violin, the flute, or the hautboys; it is insisted with equal urgency that both ear and musical intellect must be subjected to valuable gymnastic exercises in sol fa and harmony, for vocal composition as well as instrumental. That which now makes possible for the blind a rational and extended course of musical study, with a view to enable them to make this their career, is the most excellent musicography that Braille has given them. The sixty-three signs resulting from the combination of the six points ⠿ serve to mark in a sufficiently clear and rapid way all classes of music, from the simplest ro-

mance of Rossini to the most elaborate collection of Wagnerian symphonies. The notes of the Braille musicography each indicate, not only the tone, but also its duration. There is nothing beyond their reach. All of the signs are placed successively on the same horizontal line. This arrangement is most favorable for rapid tactile reading, as the finger is not obliged to move rapidly from the upper to the lower and from the lower to the upper, but constantly in the same direction from the left to the right. There is a still further advantage in that the notes occupy about one half less space than ordinary music.

The bibliography for blind musicians is already considerable. They have not only the music published for their use in many countries, but much more that has been written by a host of special copyists.

In general, it is necessary that the blind should know by heart the music that they wish to interpret.[1] However, in singing it is quite possible to read and execute simultaneously, as in singing the hands are free. It is learned in this way. The good blind musician whose

[1] It may be observed that in playing certain instruments that require but one hand, and sometimes in playing the organ, the blind player may read his music with his left hand while he executes or manipulates the stops of the organ with the right.

memory is sufficiently retentive will easily memorize even a long and complicated piece after one or two careful readings, the impression being partly mental and without the assistance of an instrument. In other instances he will read with the left hand the part to be played by the right, that part being executed simultaneously with its reading. Then the process is reversed, the right hand reads the part of the left. Finally both hands execute together the parts learned separately. The memory for the notes as for the words develops prodigiously by its daily rational exercise; and here a knowledge of harmony makes it possible for him to understand what he learns. In this particular there are numbers of the blind who are phenomena. One of my fellow-pupils, who had spent but three terms at the conservatory, where he was instructed on the organ by M. Franck, learned fugues, toccatas, and bassacailles of Bach in the omnibus that carried him from the Boulevard Montparnasse to the Rue Bergère. He insisted that he was never in better mood to learn a counter-point or a stretto of Bach than when between the Rue St. Placide and the Boulevard Montmartre.

A future is assured to the blind child who learns to play the piano as a musician, under-

standingly, and with intelligence to analyze what he executes; but success is yet more certain to him if he add to the talent of a pianist a knowledge of piano-tuning. The study of piano-tuning and repairing is growing in importance in the schools for the blind. It occupies a middle place between the profession of music and the trade of a workman. In reality the blind-tuner is at the same time an artist from his highly developed ear, and a mechanician because of his ability to make the careful repairs necessary to fit the instrument for playing or singing.

If you have never seen more of the piano than the black and white keys, and should desire to examine more intimately the structure of the instrument, it will be necessary only to go to the National Institute for Blind Youths in Paris, or to any American School for the Blind, and mingle with the class of apprentice tuners. They will make you place, displace, replace, and displace again the wires, hammers, pedals, and keys. You may not become actually familiar with these things yourself, but you will be very much edified by the way that blind tuners are made to become masters of their art.

It is a remarkable fact, and one but little

known, that the schools for the blind have systematized the teaching of piano-tuning to such a degree that not only is the aspirant tuner initiated into the wonderful mysteries of temperament, but there has been substituted the art of rational study for simple empiricism.

The result is to make tuners who, from the delicacy of their ear, the certainty of their hand, and the excellence of the method, defy all competition, and whose superiority has been frequently recognized by artists of the first order.

The young women are taught after the same manner as the young men, but are not instructed in practical tuning.

CHAPTER V.

PROFESSIONAL AND INDUSTRIAL TRAINING.

ALMOST any ordinary industrial text-book may be used for the instruction of the blind, because in many of the trades it is not necessary that the hand should be guided by the eye. That which contributes to the choice of this or that trade is on the one hand the facility with which the blind can do the work, and on the other the readiness with which he can sell the article when manufactured. In our French schools the boys learn brush-making, chair-caning, spinning, weaving, piano-forte tuning, basket-making, and mat-making. The young girls learn all kinds of knitting, and crochetting, spinning, sewing, and all work of this kind. An interesting fact, long since established, is that the best teachers for the blind are those who are themselves blind. The seeing teacher, save in a few rare exceptions, cannot free

himself from certain preconceived ideas more theoretical than practical. On the other hand, the blind teacher knows perfectly what road the pupil must take in order to reach the end which he has himself attained.

The hand of the seeing teacher, guiding that of the blind pupil as he shows him how to knot the meshes of the thread, to twist a bunch of broom-corn, or to weave and braid the swamp grass, is very frequently either too heavy or too light. He either obstructs his pupil's efforts, or he does not show clearly enough what is to be done.

The happy mean is more easily attained by the blind teacher, who, in learning these things himself, has been placed under the same conditions as those in which he finds the apprentice whom he is to instruct.

In the larger number of trades the blind workman employs the same tools as those of the workman who sees. The instruments, however, must be modified, and may have added to them certain appliances that facilitate their use by the blind. All brush-makers, for example, use long, heavy scissors or shears, one of the blades of which is fixed for cutting the broom-corn for their brushes. The left hand holds the brush by the nood, the right

hand manipulating the free blade of the scissors. The sight directs the operation easily, since all that is required is to cut all the rows of bunches of corn the same height as that of a row which is given him as a model. In order that the blind workman may be sure of the cut of his shears, there is an added support or guide horizontally placed parallel to the stationary blade. This guide is movable, and the distance between it and the fixed blade can at will be increased or diminished. The workman having made his measurements in advance to conform with the model, nothing further remains for him to do but to press the nood of the brush against the guide, that at the same time holds the brush, and with entire confidence to bring down the movable blade, which is manipulated with the same promptitude and the same certainty as by one who sees.

It is thus that the blind are instructed that all their faculties may be educated to fit them to go out into the world and there mingle with the crowd of their fellow-workmen in the activities of life.

Now we will stop to see what they have to do in the world, what position they take there, and what is the rôle that they play in society.

PART IV.

THE BLIND IN SOCIETY.

CHAPTER I.

THE BLIND IN THE PAST.

THAT the blind should live a life of activity and usefulness in the world is a new thing, so new that many people cannot believe it to be. The tradition of ages has been that, save with a few insignificant exceptions, the congenitally blind, or they who have lost their sight in early infancy, remained helpless creatures, having no responsibilities, kept under control, and with reason to consider themselves happy if not oppressed.

In the Book of Leviticus we read: "Thou shalt not speak ill of the deaf, nor put a stumbling block before the blind." With the He-

brews they were permitted to eat in peace the bread of charity by the roadside. In pagan countries even this poor protection was not assured to them, and, as with all the infirm incapable of carrying arms, they were held in but little regard when they were not destroyed at their birth.

What should become of them? Those more learned than I, have asked the same question. With Christianity came respect for suffering made divine, and alms were abundant. The rich must care for the weak, and the poor, drawn near to God by misfortune, prayed to pay the debt and to return spiritual blessings in return for temporal gifts. This had in it much of grandeur, but to have lived so would have required a rare elevation of thoughts and sentiments.

In actual fact the blind wandered on the roadways, through the villages and towns, some begging without words, others "symphonies pick a back" seeking to amuse the nobility, citizens, and rustics, and accompanying the instrument of their choice with songs and gestures. But it is not alone to these epic recitals that they were confined. They frequently united with these illustrated songs, juggleries, pantomimes, and such other songs as should

have sent them beyond the hearing of ears polite.[1] They followed pilgrimages, in numbers, and their pilgrimages did not always savor of piety. They were concerned less, say their historians, in honoring the relics of the holy saints than in getting an occasional draught of the consecrated wine near the sanctuary.

An interesting little Italian brochure informs us that the blind of Padua, who gain their living by begging or playing musical instruments, and the wandering singers living in Padua or its vicinity, were obliged to join a fraternity under a penalty of a fine of nineteen deniers, and this was exacted on each occasion that they were detected receiving money after having refused to join the organization. A fine of ten sous was required for blaspheming against God or the Madonna, and five sous for those who, hearing blasphemy, neglected to inform the guardian of the fraternity within five days. On the other hand, charity to the fraternity was recommended in every way, and even, I suppose, imposed. Unhappy was he who dared to vilify, insult, or cross a member of this order. If one were to meet a blind "brother" who had lost his way, it was required by ordinance of him that he should direct

[1] We read in the *Manava-Dharma-Sastra* by Manou: "The blind, the congenital deaf-mutes, and the lame could not be heirs-at-law; but it is proper that whosoever received this inheritance should provide for the other both subsistence and clothing while he lives; whoso neglects to do this, will be considered a criminal."

Far other was the custom at Lacedemonia: "In the vicinity of the city was a deep gulf," says Barathre, "into which were thrown all the new-born that were deformed and infirm."

him aright, and even accompany him to his home, and give him money to the amount of twenty sous, if he were in need. For this assistance the common purse might be drawn upon, to reimburse their benefactor, or better still, it might be made up from individual contributions of equal amount. Unhappy was he who should deprive a brother of the child who should guide him. If it were done in a benevolent manner, the fine was but twenty sous. If one should fall ill, after five days he received from the fraternity a benefit of three sous daily till he was enabled to resume his beat. If he died all of the blind brothers attended the funeral in a body, bearing lights and offering prayers for the soul of their dead companion, and reciting twenty Pater Nosters and the same number of Ave Marias.

A fifteenth century writer, Andre de la Vigne (1496), in *The Miracle of St. Martin*, gives us a somewhat significant glimpse of the morals of the time:

"There was a blind man and a cripple who lived happily from the product of their infirmities, and they rejoiced that they could enjoy the fat of the land, through the piety of good Christians. But he of the crooked legs came to his companion one day with terrible news. A great saint had just died, and they were bearing his body in procession to the church, and the report was current that with such miraculous and irresistible power were the remains invested, that those who passed by were instantly healed of all their ills. 'Merciful Providence,' cried the blind man in terror, 'if the Holy Saint should cure us, what would become of us? It would take from us that by which we gain our daily bread.' 'We must make

off,' answered the cripple, 'and that right quick.' 'Yes,' said the other, 'let us to the tavern speed; I 've been there oft in time of need.' But the former, unaccustomed to a rapid pace, and his fellow not seeing at all, an ingenious idea occurred to them. The cripple scrambled upon the shoulder of his companion, and thus associated, they rushed toward the nearest inn. Unfortunately, their flight was impeded, the *cortége* came, the shrine passed, and the two rogues were cured. The cripple was furious as he felt the solid earth beneath his feet; but the blind man, and the distinction is a subtle one, exclaimed in involuntary ecstasy, 'Ah!' said he, 'I never dreamed how grand a thing it was to see. I see Burgundy, and France, and Savoy, and on my knees I thank God humbly."

But it should be borne in mind that little had been done to give to these jolly rogues more austere notions of the respect that was due themselves.

From the *Journal of a Citizen of Paris*, we read, in quaint old French, that in 1425, the last Sunday in the month of August, as it was the custom, in a little hotel named the Arminac, on the Rue St. Honore, four blind men, each armed with a stick in his hand, were put in a park together with a fat and active pig, which they might have if they could kill it.

"This was done, and the singular combat began, and they gave each other such weighty blows with their sticks that they themselves were much hurted, for when

the better to strike the pig they would hit each one the other, and had they been truly armed they would have killed each other."

"Likewise on the Saturday evening preceding the Sunday on which this took place, these blind men were led through the streets of Paris, all with great sticks, having a banner in front on which was painted a pig, and before them a man beating a drum."

The blind, however, have been given most noble employment. A chronicler relates that during one year Paris was continually hidden under the densest fogs, so that it was with the greatest difficulty that people could traverse the streets even at mid-day. But the blind of the Quinze-Vingts were in no way inconvenienced, and as they were absolutely familiar with every alley-way in their good town, they became public guides. They were employed at so much per hour, and, holding the skirt of their blind leaders, the citizens were led in safety through the streets.[1]

In Paris the Quinze-Vingts were lords and masters. There, and even in the Provinces when business called them away (for they had their business affairs) with the *fleur-de-lis* on their breasts, a concession due to the grace of

[1] Bulwer's blind girl, in the *Last Days of Pompeii*, performed a like service during the darkness preceding the destruction of the city.

Philippe le Bel, they were assured the chiefest place at the door of the sanctuary. They were the aristocrats. They had frequent bouts with the blind of De Chartres, the Six-Vingts, on account of the famous *fleur-de-lis*, which was not a common emblem, and which carried a special significance. Philippe the Tall had given to these also the *fleur-de-lis*, accompanied by a silver cross, but the Chartrans having every advantage which they could take of their high and mighty Parisian *confrères* voluntarily relinquished the cross, hence the contests, and even worse.

Since St. Louis had created the Quinze-Vingts not for the three hundred legendary Cavaliers, as has been wrongly stated, but for the blind of the city of Paris, this organization has always received special favors. The faithful, princes, kings, and popes, have interested themselves in the welfare of the Quinze-Vingts. They have made gifts and bequeathed legacies. The kings, beginning with Louis IX., accorded them pensions, privileges, and immunities. Popes issued bulls in favor of the community. It was in substance a veritable congregation, goods were held in common, members had the title of blind brother or sister—with rules, habit, special constitution, offices, chants for

the chapel, and nothing indeed lacking that belonged to a special order.

In course of time these gentlemen of the Quinze-Vingts grew rich. They formed a body and held rigorously to their prerogatives. In Paris they snubbed the self-sufficiency of intruding rubbish gatherers, whether blind or seeing, who permitted themselves to be driven back to their districts. Not alone by the Augustins and the Theatins at St. Eustache and elsewhere were they given the church portal, but still further was permitted the singular custom of running obsequiously to the four corners of the church, from the nave to the transept, to tell to the faithful the saint of the day, and the privilege of reciting their prayers in a loud voice, while ordinary mortals were obliged to pray in silence.

. . . . . .

I do not assume that, before the nineteenth century, there were not those among the blind who knew how to make themselves useful, to gain their living by honest work, and therefore to acquire dignity and independence. There have been these in all times and in all countries.

In Japan from the earliest times,—and what is not old there?—nearly all the blind are

masseurs, and almost all masseurs are blind, so that they are spoken of indifferently as masseurs or blind. And as with our friends of the antipodes, the masseurs are a class much in demand, as all require their services, the blind as a result realize large incomes, and when they have laid aside a certain sum it is placed at interest where it rapidly augments.

A most lucrative and original profession is still carried on by the blind of Cairo. Among the pious mussulmans it is the custom, when one of high position dies, to have the Koran recited every day continuously for thirty consecutive days by three specialists, who relieve each other. A blind man knowing the Koran, and having a good, strong voice, has, it would seem, little time to rest.

But leaving Egypt and Japan, and the blind of former times, let us look upon the blind of to-day, the children of Valentine Haüy.

CHAPTER II.

THE BLIND OF TO-DAY.

I WOULD that you might go, as I did yesterday, to the home of a blind workingman, living with his wife and children, two daughters, upon the earnings of his daily labor, and without assistance from any one. His family are located in one of the pretty houses on a narrow way leading from the Tour de Vanves. Though well on into April, it was still cold. It was half past eight in the evening. The father of the household had just returned from his work, an hour later than was his custom. Work was hurried, perhaps. The frugal supper had just been finished, and each addressed me in simple but cordial words of welcome. The workman, without the loss of a moment, taking his tool from the wall, courageously began his task, saying with cheery good-humor, "It is our rent that we must earn now, you know."

He worked at his trade, that of brushmaking, from seven in the morning until seven at night, and at weaving from eight o'clock on. His wife quickly put away the four napkins, with little of anything else, and seating herself at the side of the table opposite to the weaver began her work.

Her task was stitching together the leaves of books. Through the day, and often through the long evenings she would sew together hundreds and hundreds of printed sheets, most commonly those of Larousse's pocket dictionary. Had she time to see what filled the closely packed volumes, she might read the definition of many words and things that were only myths for her—rest, fortune, and even comfort and security. I have not said happiness, and purposely, because it is everywhere and nowhere, it is a word yet to be defined. But little time had this woman to read; she must sew and sew, and still sew, always rapidly joining the threads together, and for this she is paid one franc, *twenty cents a thousand!* To-day she said to me, "My work did not come till late in the afternoon, was n't it too bad! I waited there till one, but there is nothing to be said, the work must be brought back to the bindery in Rue du Montparnasse to-morrow, finished

and well done. I am classed among the best workwomen, those on whom they may always depend, and I am always given work even when there is little to do." Every evening this brave little woman earned twenty to thirty cents in order that she might not lose the day, in which she attended to her household duties—her cooking, simple as it was, washing, mending, etc.

While we were talking, the children were snugly tucked in their cribs, and were sleeping quietly, and in their dreams, perhaps, playing with their more fortunate neighbors, the children of the shop-keeper on the Avenue du Main, of the Champs Élysées and that quarter.

And I thought as I made my memoranda of what they said, that there are indeed in the by-ways of Paris many poor workmen, modest and unknown, who are none the less heroes in their patient toil; who look not in the pages that fall under their eyes for the meaning of such words as "proletariat" and "social revolution," but think that the true remedy for all their misery is in yet added courage, and in continued and enduring patience.

Now returned to my home and seated before my desk, and the mass of papers filled

with prosaic and wearisome detail, piled before me, I almost instinctively shrink from my daily task, and it seems that never will the hands upon my watch-dial go slow enough to enable me to complete all the duties that must be done, but I take new courage when I think of that other blind man, in his little room in the court of the Tour de Vanves. He hears also, as he works, the beating of his old wooden clock, and he knows that the arm of his faithful companion keeps steadily time with its monotonous to and fro, and yet more quickly moves his shuttle, for he must be in his shop in the morning at seven, that he may earn the forty or fifty cents on which his family lives. This evening his work will not cease till he shall have finished as many rows of stitches as shall represent the 365th part of the rent of the two little rooms, where they sleep, and eat, and work, where the luxury of being ill is not permitted to them, and where the loss of a single hour makes a serious deficit in the income.

More cheerful is the home of the blind musician. His house, of which he is the sole occupant, is very respectable, on one of the best streets of the locality, the Avenue de la Gare, and everything indicates gentility; the

letter-box by the door, the polished door-handle and bell-pull. It is at once attractive and easy of access. Let us go in. On the ground floor are the kitchen, dining-room, and parlor. At the end of the passage through the plate-glass doorway may be seen the spray of a pretty fountain playing in the centre of a court, shaded by several large trees, and brightened by blooming flowers. This is his garden, a little damp, and somewhat small, but really a garden. On the first story are three rooms at least, and on the second are the garret and store-room. One may live in such a house as this. Now let us be seated for a moment in the parlor; this is a *piece de resistance*. The master of the house will greet us here. The room is well furnished, the chairs and foot-stools are handsomely upholstered in velvet. The centre table is covered with a rich cloth in excellent taste, while on the mantel-piece is an imitation gold bronze clock, designed to represent a pastoral scene, sheep and lambs and a shepherd with his crook, and who is always sure to look after his flock. A bust of Homer, or Beethoven, or even of Wagner; a lyre or harp would be more *apropos*, though doubtless these objects are the selection of the lawyers

or doctors. In the absence of a harp we will find a very tolerable piano. If it is open we will find the name of De Montel, the most famous of the manufacturers of pianos for the blind. Underneath will be a pile of books in the raised point print type of Braille, probably on music, and in the middle of which will be a black box containing a violin. Elsewhere are objects appropriate to the room, and withal a daintiness of arrangement suggesting a feminine hand. In fact, our musician is enjoying the results of well-earned success, and this in a word is his history, as it is of the larger number of his *confrères.*

He is many years the junior of the brush-maker of the court of Tour de Vanves ; he has nevertheless been his fellow-pupil. Before entering the School for the Blind in Paris, in which both had been educated, his circumstances were not better than were those of his companion. He was born of poor but honest parents, having health, sufficient intelligence, and a willingness to work. But it was quickly seen that he had rather unusual musical gifts. His studies had been thorough, and without ever becoming a remarkable musician, he had left the institution a good pianist, well informed in harmony and counterpoint, a fair composer,

an agreeable organist, and a most excellent tuner.

The society whose work is to find employment for the young men and women after they have left the Blind Institute, had sent our host, then only twenty years old, into a little town. They were in need of an organist and teacher of music, and in the outskirts of the town was great need of skilled piano-tuners—the unskilled of course abound everywhere. In the earlier days of the society it was possible to assist very few of the pupils, who were obliged to seek lodgings in some furnished room, and board with some respectable family. But all was not done when the young man had secured his position as an organist; all remained to be done, for the *curé*, a man of an energetic as well as of a sympathetic disposition, having dared to offer a blind organist to his vestry, and compelled them to accept him, would not and could not impose this *protégé* upon them as a musical professor and tuner. Moreover, the salary of an organist is not that of the clergyman, and he must live. "You must make yourself known to them," said the *curé*, "and then they will appreciate you." In order to become known he must undertake tuning, when the expenses were often equal to

the receipts, organize concerts with untried amateurs, concerts in which it is customary to give the proceeds to the "poor," although they were themselves far from rich. After having sowed well, it is rare that the harvest does not follow, and with him in truth it did come and it was abundant. After one of their successful concerts, at which the daughter of a prominent city official had heard the blind artist execute with brilliancy the fantasy from Prudent's *Miserere du Trouvère*, she declared that she should be satisfied only when she had learned from him that delicacy of touch that had also so charmed her in the music of the grand mass in the sanctuary. But it is impossible, protested her parents; a blind man cannot be a teacher of music, and "Why leave Mme. X.? To be sure you are not making much progress, but then she is a very estimable woman!" Finally, however, her wish was granted, and her improvement was marked and rapid. While she will never probably play the famous fantasy of Prudent, she did make pleasant the long winter evenings with the variations of Leybach. Encouraged by this example, the daughter of a judge was his next pupil, then of a lawyer, then of a schoolmaster, then of a recorder. The children of business and of professional

men, well-to-do mechanics, and others were soon committed to his care, and the monthly receipts became correspondingly large and acceptable.

A larger and more comfortable room replaced that in which he began. A reception room was necessary, and then came the pretty little house on the Avenue de la Gare. Finally, and this is always the end when the end is good, he was married to a bright little woman without fortune, it is true, but devoted to his interest and welfare, and an interesting family may be expected.

But we must not deceive ourselves. When two or three little ones fill the pretty interior there will be less order, less propriety, and also, perhaps, less ease. The organist, De S——, knows all of this, but he has, he tells us, to give him courage "the example of his older friends, a good *clientèle* that is growing from year to year, and, above all, faith in the providence of God."

We have seen the blind in their homes that we might the better know their lives. It was Jefferson who said:

"To know social conditions well, one must do as I have done—seek out the people in their little home, sit by their fireside, eat their bread, sleep on their beds under

pretext of getting rest, but in reality to be assured that they are soft.

"You will find in looking for these things a satisfaction of a new kind, and you will realize a pleasure yet more sublime when your knowledge of their needs enables you to furnish to them the means of having a better couch, or to put a bit of meat in the pot in which is cooking the vegetables on which they live." [1]

If these domiciliary visits take time, we would have the pleasure of seeing the blind working-people in their homes. Both sexes, as a rule, remain celibates. Young blind girls who marry are the exception.

For the woman life is hard, too hard even if she is not with her family, in a workshop, or an institution in which she can be employed.

In his beautiful work, the *Misère à Paris*,[2] M. d'Haussonville shows us how little a woman who toils, even with all her senses complete, can earn in a day, and demonstrates that it is almost impossible for her to live unless she labors with her hands. In general, the blind, under similar circumstances are able to earn about one half as much as those who see.

It is much easier for blind women with musical training to gain a livelihood than for

[1] *Letters of Thomas Jefferson to Lafayette during his Travels in Provence*, April 11, 1787.

[2] *Misère et Remèdes*, by Count d'Haussonville, of the French Academy, Paris.

men. There are not open to the latter the numerous pensions, orphanages, asylums, and retreats in which women are taken. Those who are teachers either of instrumental or of vocal music have often in their little chamber their piano, their library, and their work-box. Their days are always well filled, and they are dependent upon no one.

Often from their little economies they may be giving assistance to an old father, contributing to the education of a younger brother, or laying aside their little hoard for their old age. They pass their days sheltered from the storms of life, without great joys, nor yet great sorrows, surely a degree of peaceful happiness with which they may well be content.

CONCLUSION.

THE BLIND OF TO-MORROW.

We have seen the blind after they have completed their school life, when with physical and intellectual faculties developed they have succeeded in finding work. Does it seem to you then that time and money have been wasted in educating them? "The result has been marvellous" you say. But will you go further than this? Do you wish to be of service to the trained blind? It is to this end that I have written, and if I have succeeded in practically interesting any in work for the blind, I shall not have wearied you in vain.

All has not been done for them. There is still much for us who are specialists in this work to accomplish, more for legislative authority to do, and yet more to be done by individual effort. Technical methods are susceptible of great improvement, and should re-

ceive our attention. All the blind have not yet been trained. We must increase the number and importance of the schools. We must have shops for the workers. The communes, the Departments, the State, can greatly facilitate this work. And, finally, we must recollect, and this is the burden of my theme, that after leaving the schools the trained blind do not readily find an opportunity of practising their professions under lucrative conditions. Here the great Public can do much, nay more, it can do all, and without public help all that has been done counts for nothing.

What then? you say. This you can do; you have a piano, have you not? Give the tuning of it into the hands of some blind man. Your children or those of your friends desire instruction on the piano; remember that the blind may make excellent teachers.

Your floors, your clothing, your shoes, the harness of your horses, all require brooms and brushes. The manufacture of these articles forms one of the most important methods of bread-winning for blind workmen. You should patronize their establishments.

All kinds of knitted and crochetted work are done exquisitely by blind women; and all they ask is work. Could you not give your

support to some educational institution for the blind, or make a *protégé* of some little child whose darkened life must otherwise be one of helpless misery? Consider how little effort may be required to secure a hopeful future for some blind musician, by lending your influence in procuring for him pupils or a position as organist.

It is a social duty to educate the blind that they may become self-supporting, and no less to encourage and assist them by your patronage when they have become so.

If you do not do this, what, I beg you to consider, will you do with the blind? for they cannot be suppressed. I see but two alternatives, and from these you may choose. Exempt them from work altogether, thereby making them objects of charity, or limit them to such work as is merely automatic. In the first case, you must provide a house or shelter for them, and theirs, for none can deny them the right to home and family. This means to condemn them to deplorable and demoralizing idleness. It is an infringement of the law of work.

In the second case, it is to reduce a living human soul, with the attributes of divinity to the level of the animal creation. "If a man will not work, neither shall he eat." We

brutalize a man when we make a machine of him. We take from him pride, self-respect, and ambition, when we take the possibility of improvement out of his work; and then we scorn him when we find that our own inhumanity has driven him into intemperance.

Valentine Haüy, a hundred years ago, saw deeper than many of us to-day. He understood the blind. He understood how glorious a thing it is to raise a human soul to its proper sphere, to re-establish harmony in the world, to make musical the broken harp. Like him may not we be instrumental in giving hope and happiness to those who are less fortunate than we, by aiding them to become self-sustaining, and consequently honorable and self-respecting members of the community?

THE END.

SIZERANNE, MAURICE DE LA 1373
The blind as seen through
blind eyes, by Maurice De La
Sizeranne. G. P. Putnam's
Sons, 1893.